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ORAL HISTORY

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Date 24 May 1976

John T. Walton
(Signature - Interviewee)

5830 Pea Ridge Rd
Address

Huntington
Michael J. Galgano
(Signature - Witness)

Date 24 May 1976

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MJG: This interview is being conducted with Mr. John Walton of 5830 East Pea Ridge Road, Huntington, West Virginia. Mr. Walton was born on the 12th of July 1904 at Black Cat, West Virginia. My name is Dr. Michael Galgano. Now Mr. Walton, would you like to read your dedication?

JTW: Thank you, uh, please bear with me a few moments while I dedicate this to my wonderful father, John Marquis Walton, and my mother, Minnie Trimble Walton. My sister Dorothy W. Smith and my, uh, outstanding wife Marion Louise Walton will agree that seldom have been born two children to a man and wife who extended every facet of parenthood as gently and tenderly to direct us to being fine citizens as did our parents.

MJG: Now sir, what can you tell me about your parents, where were they from, [JTW: Uh, they were . . .] uh, how did they come to West Virginia?

JTW: Okay. Now the, uh, background of the, uh, Walton family is buried pretty far back except to the point that they, uh, migrated during the Civil War from, uh, Rockbridge County, uh, Virginia, to Camel's Creek, West Virginia which is the, Camel's Creek is just a few miles east of, uh, the city limits of Charleston on, uh, U.S. Route 60. My great grandfather, uh, worked on U.S. 60, uh, he was sort of a boss and then, uh, some of the other children that were working on a road also as it came through that section of the country. Then (clears throat) they, uh, the Walton family grew very rapidly, my father was the oldest of eight children the, uh, names of the boys were, the boy's names were, uh, John, that was my father, and Jerry, uh, Sherman, and Jim. Well the, the girls there were four of those also and that was, uh, Minnie, Alice, Lula, and uh, I can't think of the last one, (pages being flipped through) oh my, (long pause) turn it off a minute (break in tape).

MJG: And the fourth sister?

JTW: And, uh, the four sisters were, uh, Alice, Lula, Julia, and Minnie. The, uh, family stuck together, they were very, uh, very much, uh, you know, they had a good relationship always, and uh, one of the things that use to irritate me was though that, uh, the boys would always come home on weekends but seldom did they bring groceries. And (laughs) my poor dad he'd just bought groceries and groceries and groceries well that was alright, but uh, they wa-, they, uh, stuck together. My grandfather worked in the mines, and uh, the other boys they'd have different types of, uh, work, none of um had a very much of a education. And, uh, then as they started in on the, uh, they finally got jobs. That Jim, uh, got the, uh, job on the, uh, Kanawha Michigan Railroad, he stayed there until he died . . .

MJG: In what capacity, in what capacity, what was his job [JW: Uh, he . . .] on the railroad?

JTW: He was a railroad conductor all of those years, very nice too. And he had, uh, I think they had five children and they all turned out good, and uh, have, uh, good jobs and everything in the area up there now and their grandchildren also. So they did very well. Then, uh, the, uh, uh, Sherman took up his residence in Beckley, West Virginia and stayed there until about nineteen and nineteen and then he, and his, uh, just took his entire family and moved to, to California. And, uh, they, uh, did very well out there they had a chair of oil stations and some other stuff like that. The, uh, (coughs) other brother, Jerry, uh, was, uh, an engineer on the Virginian railroad and, uh, until one day they had an explosion, the engine blew up and fortunately he had just, uh, put in the fire, he was a fireman at that time and engineer also. But he just put it and extra coal into the, uh, firebox and started to step up on his regular seat by the window and when the engine exploded it threw him out, out of the window through the apparatus of the window and he came down through an apple tree. We, (laughs) we kidded him for years and years about that coming down to ground. But it hurt his back very badly

and, uh, he was, uh, incapacitated and he took up, uh, uh, small farm near (spells) L-A-N-S-I-N-G, Lansing, West Virginia. That's, uh, right near where that, uh, enormous bridge use to go across the canyon there. So we use to go up and see him and he had cherry trees and everything and it was really wonderful, a nice little place about ten acres.

MJG: Now wasy any pension provided for him by the railroad?

JTW: They, uh, they, they wasn't any such a thing you might say as a pension but they took care of him, in otherwords they, uh, uh, soon as he was, uh, out of the hospital and things like that which took quite a bit of time (coughs) they, uh, they gave him, uh, jobs and, uh, eventually he came here to Huntington as a hostler for the engines, yeah, uh, they, this being a terminal they would take the engine that came from Cincinnati off of the train at the depot and then bring it to 26th street for water, coal, inspection and so forth then it would go back on another train later. And that was his job, uh, until he retired from the C&O then he and his wife's son, Jerry Jr. and two daughters moved also to California. And one of the daughters, the others are all dead now, Jerry and, and all of the family, the boy and the girls, uh, except one and, uh, they live, uh, just outside of, uh, San Francisco. He was, uh, with the, uh, the, uh, Frisco Examiner I believe as a, some sort of a editor or something like that at one time he was pretty good, real good.

MJG: Now how did your father and mother come to meet?

JTW: That, uh, well fore she was, uh, a teacher and, uh, they, uh, I don't know exactly the, uh, social event but they always had those, uh, things like, uh, you know picnics and outings and things and then church too. They, uh, she was a Baptist and attended church regularly there in Pratt, and uh, of course she lived in the old home place which was down at, at the mouth of Paint Creek. That was, uh, their, that was where she lived and, uh, with her mother and father and then when her father died why she wouldn't leave her

mother until her mother also past away and then she and dad were, uh, married. And incidentally that marriage was one of the biggest events in the Kanawha County for years and years and years, no fooling. They, they just came from all around, all of those people up there had been her students and, uh, they came and brought their children and grandchildren and it was, it must have been, but it took place at Hansford, West Virginia which is right at the mouth of Paint Creek just about, uh, just about a quarter of a mile from where her home was and, uh, then, uh, uh, Uncle Dick, uh, Uncle Dick was the, uh, where the marriage took place and from the way they talked it, it was really, really a wedding there were no two ways about it. They was just hundreds of people there and food and ice cream and everything, ice cream you know in those days was a delicacy

[MJG: Yeah.] no two ways about that. But they had, uh, a wonderful wedding and, uh, went over to, uh, Virginia Beach on their honeymoon then came back and they, uh, lived in the old home place there for a short time and the, uh, when dad got this, uh, had been working down at, uh, Black Cat, Crown Hill, Black Cat, practically the same thing, and uh, they built a tippie there, he built, helped build a tippie and then the store and the houses and, uh, then he chose a place on the side of the hill where he would like to have a house and so they granted him his wish and they built a little house over there on the side of the hill.

MJG: How did Black Cat get it's name?

JTW: Uh, Black Cat was, uh, called Black Cat because of the, uh, seam of coal. It, uh, the Black Cat seam was one of the richest and nicest in the, well I, I suppose actually it was one of the best in the who-they they've ever discovered in the state. It was about, uh, more than six feet, uh, tall up to the slate and, uh, clean coal, beautiful, just beautiful coal and, uh, they mined that, uh, oh it must have been, uh, 20 or 30 years. They started way back there you see then, uh, it'd go on a thing for a long time. Then, uh, dad never did work in the

mines, mother wouldn't let him go in there, said she wasn't going, absolutely wasn't going to let him go into that old dark hole to get some money. So that was the end of that, she was boss.

MJG: What jobs did your dad have?

JTW: Well, uh, uh, when they built the store, uh, he had, uh, he had, a fair education and was good at, uh, mathematics and bookkeeping and things like that so they put him in charge of the store and, uh, they were there then, uh, evidently about, uh, six years because my brother Peyton was born there, and uh, he's the one, he died with, by, uh, diptheria then, uh, I was born about three years later and, uh, that was when Peyton died just, uh, in during that period of time that I was about a year old and he was, uh, it was, uh, very, very bad there was no two ways about it, left a scar on them that they never quite could get rid of you know, uh, death like that, they had pictures of him, he was a nice little fella.

MJG: Who took the photographs in, in the towns at that time?

JTW: The, uh, there were traveling, uh, uh, uh, photographers the same as they were pack peddlers, back peddlers, you know, was, uh, uh, usually, uh, a foreigner, uh, either a Jewish or Italian or some person of that, one of those and, uh, they would this pack, uh, pack that they carried on their back would sometimes weigh a hundred and fifty pound and they had everything under the sun in it. They was just a, uh, might say a, a traveling department store and they did very well, however they, uh, met with, uh, foul play quite often they, there was a bridge, the C&O bridge, uh, just east of Hanley, West Virginia where it crosses Morris Creek there were at least, uh, five pack peddlers killed and their bodies thrown underneath there. But, uh, that was the same thing with the, uh, the photographers. They would go and, and uh, let it be known that, they usually got there on a Saturday and went to church on Sunday so the word

would get around real good. Then the next week they'd spend in that area and people would, uh, get, have their pictures taken. Although in, uh, Montgomery and Charleston there were established photographers also but the, uh, the fellas that, uh, hit the trail they did very well for a long time.

MJG: How often as a young boy did you get to go into either Montgomery or Charleston?

JTW: Uh, the, uh, the uh, the trains, uh, they had the through trains and then they had what we call the shuttle. Uh, the shuttle ran I believe from, uh, Deep Water to, uh, Charleston and, uh, that, it made about, uh, three trips a day and, uh, it was, uh, uh, had very few, uh, coaches on it but it was, uh, patronized heavily, uh, they was always a crowd on the shuttle in and in any direction because the roads were so horrible and, uh, just rough grading that, uh, the tupe grading they did then of course was just with a, a scoop and a pair of horses. That was grading a road and then the rest of it was hand, they just, uh, muscle and bone and a good pick and shovel and that made a road. Well the, uh, the road from Pratt to, uh, Handley, the railroad was, uh, trucked on solid road through a good part of that area and the, uh, county road had to go in some places as much as a hundred feet above the, uh, railroad and it was very twisty, even today you have to know or you wouldn't, (laughs) don't want to take any chances on, Handley narrows that's all there is to it. And the same way to, uh, to Charleston the, uh, the dirt road was all it was, uh, sometimes they'd put, uh, rock in and pound it up you know but the biggest part of the time after rains and things like that, uh, uh, uh, you'd drag your differential on the mud almost anyplace so the shuttle was really a big help, there were no traffic on the river, passenger traffic on the river, of any kind although they was, uh, uh, iron boats, Rake's iron boat use to come to, uh, the different places and would tie up at the, at the, uh, edge of the river and, uh, the folks would, uh, take their scrap iron down and trade it for, uh, uh, glass, uh, uh, some

of that old glass would be very expensive now in fact it was beautiful stuff and that they bought it but they had, uh, quite a number of things, utensils, kitchen utensils and things like that. So you took your scrap down and bought, if you wished or they'd give you money for it either way. But it was, uh, quite a thing (inaudible). So everybody grabbed all the iron they could find (laughs) take it down to the river.

MJG: (Inaudible) things the company store didn't carry?

JTW: Well, uh, the, uh, company store normally was back a distance except now right at, uh, right when that Black Cat was right on the river but there wa-the, uh, other stores were, uh, uh, personally owned, one in Pratt that was there for years and years and years was owned by J.A.B. Holt (spells) H-O-L-T. And he and his family operated that store for about two generations at least. And my cousin, uh, drove the, uh, delivery wagon for him for a long time and, uh, he had a horse name Ginger, black fella and a beautiful thing and Jim loved the horse as well as he did the job. And he did a fine job but, uh, you know what, uh, those things all just tie into so, so far back. No Rake's didn't give, uh, give them any competition, the things that they had were bought in Cincinnati and, uh, perhaps up along the, uh, river where they hadn't built glass plants you know, things like that, there were no competition in that they more success in the, in the store as, uh, it was, uh, now for instance Holt had everything. They had bolts of material, lace and, and uh, anything from thread right on through to slab bacon and that was a good commodity too (laughs).

MJG: Now what about the store your father operated, what kinds of commodities did he have?

JTW: (Coughs) the, uh, the company stores, uh, took care of the needs of, uh, practically everything that, uh, you could think of in the way of, uh, of clothing and, uh, also in the, uh, form of, of material to work in the mines and things like that. Now the, uh, one

thing about it, they bought from wholesalers in Charleston, the biggest trailer was shipped right out of Charleston, and uh, it was, uh, the, they had just about anything that a person wanted. And one of the things that they specialized in was good meat. They had, uh, good beef and, and uh, then the type clothing they bought was not, uh, fantastic or outstanding or anything but it just good heavy normal long johns and shirts and so forth and, uh, they also had a, uh, variety of available supplies. And our store, uh, handled all types of mine supplies, overalls, shoes, mine caps, carbide lamps, mine picks, augers, alot of people don't know what an auger is.

MJG: What is an auger?

JTW: The auger is, uh, has, uh, the back end of an auger is like the handle on the old time brace and bit. And the front end of it is about two inches in diameter and, uh, uh, shaped to cut into the face of the coal. And that fella would put that thing against his chest and brace himself and push that auger and twist it until the hole was back, uh, oh, uh, depended a great deal on the, uh, type of coal that they were working on but most of the time it went in approximately four feet. And then, uh, the uh, let's see the augers, sledge hammers, fuses, scribes, tampers. Now after the man, uh, uh, bored his hole he would, uh, take paper and, uh, make a sort of a roll and fill that with black powder, push that back into the hole and use this tamper, uh, that had a little hole down at the bottom so that the, uh, fuse, you put that in it first, fuse and then, back this way and you took the tamper and shove it back in there and, uh, then you lighted the fuse and took off [MJG: Um, mmm.] and it blew the coal down. In the meantime it had been machined or hand cut down close to the floor of the, uh, mine. The mine normally would run about, uh, the hole, uh, they cut would run about six inches above the floor but those, uh, those men would, uh, sit, stand and squat to cut that seam across there so that when their explosion took place it would throw the coal outward, see, not just down but also

outward. It was a great , uh, thing to learn how to do it, uh, then they, they had, uh, powder and monabell and dynamite. Now monabell and dynamite there, there's a difference in that. The monabell if I'm not mistaken about this, I hope I'm not the, uh, monabell has a capacity to, uh, cause, uh, an explosion, the pressure in different directions at the time of explosion. Now dynamite if I'm right about that, exerts pressure downward almost exclusively. And we had gloves and shirts and bandana handkerchiefs and long john underwear and, uh, the paper that we made the shot I just described there. Rolled and filled and, and uh, pushed back into the face of the coal then we had the large scoop type coal shovel, canteens for water, dinner buckets, files, normally the blacksmith at the entrance, uh, kept the picks and augers and, uh, uh, sharpened by hand at the mouth of the mine. He did all sorts of work for the, took care of the cars and things like that that run into the mine and, uh, uh, but at times, uh, that file came in, uh, uh, and it was very, very essential to have one about because if you was back in there and half a mile back underneath the ground you wanted to sharpen that thing so it wouldn't push your chest clear in to your backbone why it was a good thing to work with.

MJG: Um, mmm, [JTW: The . . .] uh, the workmen, did the workmen have to supply their own equipment, buy their own picks [JTW: Oh yes.] and their own shovels?

JTW: Oh yes, yeah. That was, uh, course in later years they begin to, to uh, give em some help but the, the biggest part of the time it was, uh, that was a man's tools and he had to have um [MJG: Um, mmm.] Those picks, uh, uh, were good steel and you couldn't use a file on them they was just real hard but, and the, to pick the coal you'd, uh, go with the vein as much as you could and, uh, of course when you hit the cross it was rough, real rough (break in tape). But I think one of the cruelest things was, uh, uh, to have to hand drill the holes, [MJG: Yes.] sometimes there'd be four, it depend on the width of the so call room and the room, uh, really fast that made the, uh, entry,

uh, uh, let's see, what's that called. Uh, just the entry that was all there was to it and then as it advanced well then they'd cut off to the right and the left, the moorings and when they, uh, they left a pillar in between, now for instance you go forward, uh, say, uh, forty feet then you cut over, uh, twenty feet and then come back to the right around a block of coal and come, then you would be almost back to where you were. In other words you go straight ahead make a right and a right and a right and there you were, / MJG: Leaving a block in the center. / yes and that cut that block that hold the, uh, ceiling up, now a mine, a mine wasn't hardly abandoned. They would go in and put as many posts and things under it as they could around and then take that, uh, partition that block of coal out and eventually the roof would fall. They liked the, the hard work for the, uh, posts in the mines, uh, (coughs) some of um I think were, uh, hickory posts but, uh, the others, uh, they wasn't too much of the, uh, the others around, I forget exactly what they did use for the, uh, (break in tape). But it all came from the mine, they signed special contracts.

MJG: Now how far would, would the mine itself be from the community, from the, the mining camp, the village?

JTW: Oh right in, right in the center of it most of the time / mjg; Um, mmm. / yeah they, they built the houses as near as they could for several reasons and they, they, uh, course the men had to walk, they had to walk, uh, they walked over to the, the uh, place and the forerunners, the ones that had to go up to the top they had to get there the best way they could for, to start the thing a rolling. But, uh, the community is, uh, uh, very compact, however the houses were not, uh, what you would call right on top of one another, they were usually on forty foot lots or maybe some fifty, and uh, the back end of um of course they ran up the hill or down the hill and they had a good bit of room, but, uh, now the, uh, main thing was to have it all there now in, uh, delivering coal for them to burn

it, uh, saved distance there on the, uh, the, uh, the time that it took to get it from the tippie to the houses and things of that kind also in the wintertime the horrible mud that the people lived in these camps had to go through to get almost anywhere. There wasn't any such a thing as a, a road, uh, just a wagon and, uh, there comes up an interesting thing, uh, turnpikes use to cross-uh, to, uh, charge toll according to the width of your tire, uh, a very, uh, slender tire say an inch and a half or, or so wide they paid the premium because they bit into the ground and, (laughs) and ate the turnpikes up and cause, caused holes in it and everything else but, and a wide one like a, uh, Conestoga wagon, uh, they got by pretty easy, yeah, yeah.

MJG: Now you mentioned a blacksmith working right at the, the head of the, the mines, [JTW: Yeah.] was he employed by the company or [JTW: Yes.] was he self-employed?

JTW: Yes. He, uh, no he was, he was employed by the company, uh, and they were, they were, uh, truly, uh, just art, just real artist with their, uh, tools. They could almost make anything whether from a horseshoe on up and, uh, they, uh, they, uh, their job was to, uh, keep the tools sharp and the bits that they used in the, uh, in the cutting machines they had to sharpen those, those were heavy steel and they had to cut those, uh, also. But, uh, the, uh, cutting machine at that type period were very crude, and uh, even as tough as the steel was it kept the blacksmith very busy just sharpening the bits in the ma-cutting machine. The, uh, the augers and the, the picks and things like that they kept that up and then, uh, uh, (break in tape). The, uh, blacksmith not only confined his work to, uh, the company if he had a few minutes he'd do something for himself. For instance, uh, his house had, uh, metal numbers on it, well all the houses in the camp were numbered so that they'd know where to take the groceries and things like that and, uh, one of the, uh, uh, blacksmiths made, uh, I believe his name

was Big John, Big John somebody, but anyhow he made me a wheel, eighteen inches to twenty inches in diameter that was pretty much of a job to take, uh, quarter inch or a half inch piece of steel straight and bend it to a perfect circle and, uh, weld it and make it roll. Well he did and I had more, I think I got more enjoyment out of that one, uh, toy than anything I owned for years and years, there's no two ways about it. It was really something, you had a wire that you guided with and control it. It was really alright, that shows you how far down the line [MJG: (Laughs.)] it takes for a real enjoyment. They, uh, their fire, oh yes I mentioned the fact that, uh, around the, uh, the camp that they always built the houses, uh, somewhat as close as they could depend on the, uh, contour of the creek. Uh, the creek bed at that place and it's, they didn't want anymore bridges than they had to build although they, that uh, they had two at our camp, one for upper, uh, patch and one down at lower patch and they were real good swinging bridges and they'd, uh, normally they were made from the, uh, uh, cable. When the cable was inspected by the mine inspectors and found that it, uh, was wearing too much why they'd take the cable out that was on the monitors and the cars let the coal down the hill. They'd take the cable out and put in a new cable then use that cable to establish swinging bridges. They were very safe, and uh, course they, alot of fun too because you get out in the middle and get somebody that wasn't exactly, uh, uh, use to being on a swinging bridge and you'd first you'd get it going and then you'd run from one end to the other and make it go up and down and that was quite a thing. They, uh, uh, store that, stores were different. The, the manager, uh, had a great deal to do with the, uh, purchase of all of the things, uh, uh, in carload lots, it was made from, uh, the, uh, main office in, uh, they would ca-, uh, take a car and break it up if they had three or four places on the creek why then they'd get a third of a carload of say can milk or something like that but the majority of the time it came through in, in, in our place anyhow. You see we had, uh, whole lot of

families and then, uh, uh, right there in the camp and that reason why we had to buy carloads quite a bit. They, uh, . .

MJG: Now when you say carload what exactly do you mean,
 [JTW: A railroad . . .] railroad cars?

JTW: Uh, huh. Uh, usually a fifty foot railroad car up to capacity with the content, um, mmm, that was a carload. And we got ice from, uh, Lake Erie and also from the, uh, that ice from Lake Erie was flint, just as hard as flint when it finally got down to our place. Then, uh, if we should run out why we would buy, uh, uh, half car or something like that from the, uh, uh, bottling, Mon-Montgomery Bottling and Ice Company. They made ice cream also that, uh, they, oh my goodness they, that belonged to a man by the name of B, Ben Early, (spells) E-A-R-L-Y, he made a fortune on it and quiet, he made a fortune on it (laughs) but, uh, they was, then we had it, uh, course it wasn't the ice that we got from them it didn't have a consistency that the lake did, uh, uh, Lake Creek came in about, uh, I think they run about 18x36, sort of a cube, 18x36, 18 inches, in otherwords, the ice on the lake was 18 inches thick and then they'd cut it in squares of, uh, 36 inches or forty inches something like that, but it was wonderful ice, there was no two ways about it. We had an ice house that, uh, would hold, uh, a carload easily and we all usually ran it clear empty so that we put the, uh, new on the bottom and then sometimes we'd have to hold, take ten or twelve cakes outside and usually run three hundred pounds, uh, take um out and cover um up with sawdust. Now the, uh, after we got that in we'd put, uh, a layer of, uh, a layer of ice and a layer of sawdust, a layer of ice and a layer of sawdust until we got it up to the top. Now how you got the sawdust off of it that was your problem,
 [MJG: (Laughs).] all we was doing was furnishing the ice. And, uh, the ice house came in real handy, one time a traveling salesman, uh, at that time covered his territory quite often with a buggy and one horse and, uh, it was the type that had a

little, uh, back, wasn't a backseat but a little trunk end on the, uh, springs over the springs at the back end of the, uh, carriage. And he had the topper over it so it could stand the rain. Well this one drove up to the, uh, store one day and while he was inside my buddy, that was the, uh, mine foreman's son, he uh, (laughs) we went over and stole some, a handful of, uh, uh, plug, sample size plug tobacco, it was grape, (spells) G-R-A-P-E. And we took off for the ice house and the ice house was empty and it was summertime and it was nice and cool in there so we got over in the corner and we begin to talk about what we'd done and, and chew up about a half of one of those, uh, little plugs of, oh about, uh, three inches by inch and a half by quarter, they're real good, real tasty. Well we sat there and chew and spit and chewed and spit, about that time mother called me for lunch, dinner, dinner you see you had breakfast, dinner, and supper. We didn't, we didn't have lunch in those days, it was dinner.

MJG: Now the main meal was dinner?

JTW: That was meal in, the middle of the day meal.

MJG: But the biggest meal of the day as well [JTW: Usually.]
was it not?

JTW: Yes, uh, huh. Then, uh, (coughs) so I was to go and I knew when she called me that meant you better get on the way. So I took off, we went outside and that heat hit us and I'm telling you, you just couldn't imagine the feeling. That was my first encounter with chewing tobacco and, uh, the last one for the next five or six years or more.

MJG: Now about how old were you when that happened? About how old were you, about, approximately?

JTW: Oh I guess about, uh, nine or ten somewhere along there [MJG: Um, mmm.] So I made it to the front porch and there's a railing around it and I just drooped over the railing. And what came up I don't

think I'd ever eaten it but it came up anyhow,
 [MJG: (Laughs.)] and there wasn't any lunch
 that day and I stretched out on the porch. Dad
 came along from the store, he came down to lunch, I
 mean to dinner and, uh, he just looked at me and
 went on in the house. Mother came out, in the
 meantime she'd been out, took a look and went on
 back and she knew, everybody knew what it was all
 about (laughter)so, [MJG: Could you des. . .]
 that, uh, boy's name was Everett Burke, Everett
 Burke [MJG: Um, mmm.]. We were pals for a long
 time, uh, that, uh, he and I were, one day we were
 out, uh, along the creek bank, there's, there's a
 point. In those days that creek, that creek was as
 clear and as pure as water could be that flowed down
 any inland or any bed of anything. The, uh, the, uh,
 when they built houses that are outhouses they was a
 very rare occasion that one was near the creek because,
 well they just didn't want it that way, that was the
 main thing they, the house was usually faced toward
 the creek and the outhouse was back behind that.
 And that water was really beautiful, there was no
 two ways about it. So Everett and I went down there
 one day trying to find a place to do some fishing
 and, uh, we got down to the creek there's a side
 naturally that the, uh, fish were over in that hole
 over on the other side of the creek. So we got on
 a sycamore, uh, tree that had fallen across and I
 got half way across, he was already over, I got half
 way across and I begin to slip and, and uh, the bow
 of that tree I don't, it must have been greased or
 something because I didn't, couldn't got a hold of
 anything to hold myself and I hit the water, right
 in the middle of a great big water hole. And that
 was my first attempt to swim and you talk about dog
 paddling to get out of there, I did. I got up on
 the bank, took my clothes off and hung them up on a
 tree and we went back in. So that was that, that
 was the way I learn to swim. The, uh, the clothes
 dried almost dry and when I got home why I had some
 explaining to do and we won't go into that [MJG: (Laughs.)].

MJG: Could you tell me what normal meals were like for you
 and your family, what a normal breakfast, a normal

dinner and a normal supper would have been liked?

JTW: Yes, uh, (coughs) most all of the women made their own bread. Uh, on occasions later, uh, we would get bread from Charleston that wasn't, uh, that was, uh, uh, baked, say last night and we'd get it about, uh, oh it was very good, we'd get it about, uh, noon, we were that lucky. We always had a cow and, uh, we had plenty of milk for ourselves and, uh, when we either gave it or sold it to people who couldn't afford it we gave it to em and kept them in milk too. And, uh, then the, the butter boy oh boy, that churn, there's two or three things I just never want to get in contact with again in my life and one of um is a churn, you just stand there and you up and down, up and down, up and down, then you change hands, up and down, up and down. Well the butter was good, though but fortunately or unfortunately I don't know which you'd call it, uh, I, I had been sick for years and years and, and uh, had a little trouble they gave me a awful lot of castrol oil. And I had taken a dose of castrol oil and it wasn't long until I was hungry so I drank a glass of milk and that milk and that oil just didn't, didn't get along very well so around the house I went, around on the back up came the milk and it looked like a skinned flounder, (laughter) just about, that's what it looked like when it came out (laughs) flatten out looked like a great big, what, that's the only thing I know of anybody else would be able to compare it to, it just looked like a great big flounder had been with his hide off. And that ended milk. From that day to this I wouldn't give you a nickel a gallon for milk, for the taste of it, uh, I, I really envy people that can go into a restuarant and get a pie, a piece of apple pie and a glass of milk and enjoy it. I can't stand the taste of it now I, we used milk all the time and, but it always has to be real sweet or chocolate or strawberry or some, uh, some flavor, uh, but the, uh, now the, uh, as I say we, we had, uh, good meat. The, uh, the butchers, uh, at the store were always good to pick the meat that was the best, in otherwords I actually don't

remember where the bulk of it came from the, the supply houses or how but I think most of it was, uh, uh, down in the, uh, butchered right there close by within ten mile anyhow and brought in and the carcass was always good if they, if they inspected one and they didn't like the looks of it they'd just turn it over to somebody else. But, uh, well then we had, uh, we had meat at least once or twice a day, we always had chickens at home and of course we were energetic and, and didn't mind the trouble that it went to to have those things. Now alot of people didn't like to do that and they would buy eggs either from us or from the store and the same way with the milk and, and uh, quite a number of other things. We always had a big garden and, uh, uh, plenty of, uh, fresh fruit and, uh, the cow, we always had plenty of milk so, uh, our life was, uh, pretty good. Now mother made, uh, biscuits a good, uh, part of the time for breakfast then at lunch time or at dinner time we had, uh, uh, a meat, uh, either the poor man's bacon. That is really wonderful, take a, a quarter inch slab from a side of a bacon and soak it in hot water for about ten minutes and then roll it in meal and fry it, butter it, and uh, you really had something good to eat. So that was, uh, and it did, it would be, uh, we, at uh, several places not at, uh, at Gallagher we didn't have any hogs for a long time. But, uh, at Quarrier we had, uh, uh, several there. But, uh, we al-we had, uh, hogs and the men would kill um and, uh, scrap um and cut um up and then rinder the, uh, fat and they'd have cracklins and then we had plenty, meat was plentiful and, uh, uh, always had, uh, mother canned quite a bit of things and then, uh, the rest of it would come, well dad and I both liked beans, uh, the, uh, navy beans and, uh, the others, wasn't very many kinds in those days and the maricot and the, uh, was then on the market and, uh, [MJG: Did you grow your own beans?]

great northern.

MJG: Did you grow your own beans?

JTW: We had, uh, we had our own beans, we raised our own

beans [MJG: Um, mmm.] and mother canned those and canned tomatoes and rhubarb and, and uh, now we had spinach every once and a while but we didn't, we didn't, uh, can it or anything like that and course we always had lettuce and onions in the garden. I mean enough to last for the whole summer you know and then on the items that, like tomatoes why I don't know they seemed to grow so much easier in those days, they did. But boy when we lived at Quarrier we had a, a garden there that was out of this world. It was, it was about two hundred feet long or more and, uh, oh it was eighty feet wide anyhow. And we had I don't know how many bags of potatoes we got out of that thing and I helped plant um and help, had to help dig um too. I swear right then I'd never have anymore potatoes to dig [MJG: (Laughs.)] but uh, the uh, uh, one of those problems with the beans were the pole. Course we, once you got your poles you had um for the next season unless it was some type that, uh, would dry or break up or, easily. But, uh, it depended a great deal on the individual.

MJG: Now how would you compare your diet to the diet of the miners, or the people who worked in the mines?

JTW: They, they uh, were (coughs) they ate well, yeah, they ate well. They, uh, they, uh, canned tomatoes they liked, uh, one of that, one of was one of the, uh, uh, staples that moved fast and then, uh, when Van Camp came through with beans in a can that, that was glorious. But, uh, normally they baked their own, uh, bread and, uh, cakes and pies and things of that kind and although those ladies that, uh, those women were good, they were, had come from, uh, foreign countries, some of um from foreign countries, they lived at Livingston, uh, my dad had, uh, uh, they opened up a new place up, uh, in one of the, uh, areas and took in about, uh, must have been a hundred and fifty Italians came in and, uh, he, uh, he bought a special stuff for them, uh, uh, olives and, uh, chicory, and uh, spaghetti and things that they normally, now the, the regular miners didn't use very much spaghetti. Not very

much but his was meat and potatoes and, uh, beans and things of that kind and they ate well. They, uh, they, well a person had to doing that type work you had to eat heavy. But, uh, meat wasn't, uh, uh, expensive, it was expensive to a degree but nothing, nothing like, uh, you'd think of it as today. Of course at that time why it was practically give away [MJG: Um, mmm.] and, uh, yes they did very well and the fresh fruits and vegetables they, we use to get the, uh, apples from, uh, uh, well the, quite frequently we'd have these and especially in the fall we'd have these hucksters, (spells) H-U-C-K-S-T-E-R-S, hucksters we called um. People would come from up in Nicholas and Summers counties and up in there with a wagon load of produce to sell and they would go around and sell it to the miners. Now they had, uh, apples and beet and, uh, nuts of all kinds, uh, they, uh, uh, hickory nuts and, uh, walnuts and, uh, then the, uh, the, up in that territory they have hazel nuts that they grow quite nice, uh, very nice, they're good. And, uh, then, uh, they had, uh, most of the time they'd bring, uh, cider and also molasses, the sorghum molasses and that was good that, that sorghum was really good. And, uh, one of the things that people liked a great deal was flapjacks and they had, uh, uh, type of, worked with yeast and they'd, uh, each individual would, uh, share his, uh, well if they were, I think they called it the mother type. The, the mother that, they'd take, uh, about a quart and then they would keep adding to it you see and then they would get a churn full and then everybody'd have alot of good buckwheat cakes, yeah they brought buckwheat down too. And, uh, different things that kind, now that, that was one angle that, uh, the, uh, company didn't mind but they, uh, along about Christmas time we'd get oranges from Florida of course and then they, uh, uh, Skookum, (spells) S-K-O-O-K-U-M, from Yakima, Washington came in wooden boxes, grapes came in, uh, uh, a hogsit type thing, the little barrel about, uh, three feet tall. The grapes were in that packed in, uh, cork, and uh, they were quite a delicacy there's no two ways about that. We had

both types the white and the red both. But, uh, we didn't have any whiskey for sale in our store or at, rare, I don't, I don't remember any of the company stores selling whiskey at all. They did however, during, uh, World War I they had, uh, Bevo, (spells) B-E-V-O, came from Annheuser Busch in St. Louis. And, uh, we'd get that stuff in by the carload (laughter). It was, uh, just slightly alcoholic, just enough to get around but it was good, a nice little drink.

MJG: Now did the miners make their own whiskey?

JTW: Rarely, now the, uh, course there were alot of people that, uh, that, uh, did have stills back in the hills there but, uh, normally the, uh, most of our people either bought it from some of those people that made it [MJG: Um, mmm.] and they, they said that they made some very good corn whiskey in those days, uh, personally the, dad didn't have any use for whiskey or beer and, uh, my uncle, bless his heart, that son of a gun made thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars every year working stone mason, drank it up and the worst part about it was that son of a gun wound up in our home and my poor dad had to take his hard earn money and buy whiskey for him so he could enjoy delirium tremens until the last breath was out of him. I never forgave him for that. Because da-, uh, pop was a good guy there was no two ways about it, he was a swell fella but, uh, to have to spend your own money to keep somebody else alive until they die of delirium tremens that's pretty rotten (laughter). Alot of people don't like to go into things like that [MJG: Um, mmm.] but, uh, we didn't have, uh, a deck of ordinary playing cards like bicycle or anything like that, we had rook and flinch and, uh, different types of games, and uh, plenty of books to read along that line, things like that. We had, we had no, uh, worry for entertainment, course if you stayed up till ten o'clock night you were way up there there's no two ways about it, we were in bed by nine o'clock most every night, dad insist on it any night.

MJG: Could you talk, tell me something about your house,

could you describe the house you lived in in the camp?

JTW: The, uh, (clears throat) well our house, we were very fortunate they, uh, the store men and the, uh, book-keepers and the mine foreman and the superintendents, it was superintendent of that, that particular place. We all had fairly decent houses. They, uh, uh, usually four or five rooms, sometimes six but all one floor, uh, the miners' houses most of um or a great many of um were built two story so that they had, uh, the kitchen, dining room, and, and uh, down, and then two or three bedrooms upstairs, no they didn't have to worry about a toilet (laughs) cause it was in, it was in another location. But, uh, the, uh, our houses were, uh, as warm as you could have they, uh, we had underpinning around ours, all three of um. We lived in three houses there in, in uh, Mucklow and Gallagher, uh, the uh, first one was, uh, vacated by the doctor, Dr. Stone had lived in that house and then he went to, uh, he withdrew, he went to Charleston I think. But anyhow we had his house until they built a new one, uh, uh, oh it wasn't any, wasn't any smaller just about the same size. And so we took the new house and then eventually the, uh, uh, chief time keeper, bookkeeper and things like that, he had a house up on the hill, uh, and it was a much larger house and we moved into that, I never could see the reason for moving up there but we did. But, uh, and that one had a furnace in it, a floor, uh, uh, you know, hot air furnace, not force air just hot air. And that one had, uh, I had to go down underneath the house and stoke that furnace all the time. But, uh, we were fortunate we didn't have any difficulty with a fire or anything except the time we were burnt out up at Morton and that wasn't through no fault of ours.

MJG: What happened, [JTW: And. . .] what happened at the house in Morton?

JTW: The, uh, it was a double house and a nice one too, I mean it was, uh, the, uh, store man, uh, the store man that was dad lived in one side and the

mine foreman lived in the other side.

MJG: Was it clapboard, was it a clapboard house or what kind?

JTW: No, no it was a, a nice house, it had, uh, siding on it and, uh, and uh, was really good all the way. Even the windows didn't rattle when it, when the wind blew and the doors were pretty close to the bottom and pretty close to the top. Some doors say a, almost a cat could almost walk underneath um. Well anyhow they, uh, this, uh, evening they always had a, uh, most everybody when they came home from the mine had to take a bath there were no two ways about that cause they were just as black as the coal they'd been digging. They got a, uh, this, uh, particular evening she went out to the, uh, washhouse they called it about, uh, ten feet square with a stove in it and, uh, tub of water on a, well on the stove, the stove was big enough to commodate a, a galvanized tub and so you just fill that with water or half full and put the fire. So this evening she didn't pay any attention to what she was doing put a little too much, uh, wood in the, uh, stove and, uh, it caught the building on fire and the wind was just right and the first thing you knew why, uh, there wasn't any men around to help, uh, get the, uh, you'd have to pump the water from, use a pump to get the water off to the surface and then you'd have to just carry it by the buckets and it wasn't any use. And, uh, our house burn and the whole thing just burned completely down and that was, uh, the, that was the first tragedy of my life I guess was to stand there kid, I must have been about six then and, uh, watch that, uh, watch that house burn and people threw things out the windows and stuff like that they'd come down with it, (laughs) come downstairs carrying a feather mattresses and a man upstairs he'd throw a wash bowl and pitcher out the window [MJG: (Laughs.)] the way it done.

MJG: Were fires very common in, in the camps?

JTW: Not, uh, not as much as you'd think. You see you

had the, uh, open, uh, fireplace in at least two or three rooms in the house and that (break in tape). The, course our home at, at Morton burn but, uh, fires in the, uh, in the houses were, it was remarkable that so few burned to the ground. Now after we left, uh, Gallagher the, uh, house that we'd occupied up on the hill burned. That, uh, that was a big house and I could never understand, it had furnace in it, uh, uh, air furnace not a force air, but uh, I could never understand why that house burned. It may have been a, caused by a short in the wires or something like that because there was room enough to walk up right under it. There wasn't a basement as is but you could walk up underneath it and stoke the furnace and, uh, with no, uh, no trouble at all. But I don't think, uh, that, uh, (clears throat) it was a rare occasion actually for a house to burn

∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠. I don't know, of course the one thing about it was that the, uh, the wives were always at home with the children and, uh, took care of things that way and the, uh, in those days the, the uh, element of the miners was pretty good, they, they were, they're not particular content with their lot but they knew that there wasn't much else for um to do. And it was, uh, uh, paying about as good as anything else was at that time which was, course it didn't amount to anything compared with today's rates. But it was hard work and, uh, most of um, uh, would go to church or they had their own organizations and things of that kind, my dad belong to the, uh, Knights of Pythius, K of P, and he was an officer in that lodge and, uh, the, then they were, oh I don't remember hardly what else there was in the way of lodges and things ∠ MJG: Was there a Redmen's lodge? ∠. Oh, oh Oddfellows, I double O F and, uh, then there was the, uh, I can't remember that one.

MJG: Was there a Redmen lodge, a Redmen's lodge?

JTW: Yeah, uh, huh, Redmen, yeah, yeah those were, uh, of course the, uh, other places like Montgomery and Charleston they had the Masons and the Elks and things like that you know, but we didn't have any, any of those wasn't, wasn't a concentration of people

enough that was the main thing. But, uh, the uh, living was, it was pretty tough sometimes but, uh, when we were talking about these houses just, [MJG: Um, mmm.] just sort of place yourself, at the housing of, that uh, only about fifty percent of um, uh, had decent, uh, uh, siding on um the rest of um were just shacks by comparison they built, uh, on the ground with no underpinning, no, the subfloor tongue groove pine, the uh, pine, uh, uh, seemed that bedbugs liked pine very much and the grooves allowed um a sort of a special super highway right around any part of the house even under the paper. And if you had wall paper if you could afford it, they helped to keep the wind out and the windows wider some and the doors had plenty of space to have a barn. Now that, uh, that was true in, uh, a great many of the miners' houses. They just weren't, uh, what they should have been and the contractors came in there just throw um up. The rugs of course, the rugs were something that, uh, some people had um, they wove um from, uh, scrap material but, uh, the biggest part of um had no, uh, no rugs and the water had to be carried anywhere from a hundred and fifty to three hundred feet from the closest pump. In the wintertime you took, uh, hot water out with you if you were there first in the morning to thaw the pump out before you got any water at all. And as far as the taste of it was concerned it varied from lousy to just plain putrid. Uh, sulphur was a predominant thing and of course you could catch rain water and we had a rain barrel at the corner of the house that, uh, a trough that, uh, dumped it in there. But, uh, after a few, uh, weeks we had to, uh, be full of wiggle worms, [MJG: Um, mmm.] a little fella about an eighth of an inch long. And you could boil the water and make it available, scum usually catch on top but you'd have to push it back with a dipper and drink what you wanted to. H₂O comes in many flavors to satisfy, uh, light, the kerosene lamp were wonderful you could, uh, could choose from, uh, one of a dozen different types of, uh, lamp as far as that was concern, uh, one thing, one thing certainly added, can be added to the list of, uh, life and death and taxes and

that's clean lamp chimneys, boy how I hated that job. I at least had to clean those things twice a week. The fuel to warm the house or stove well, uh, fortunately we had coal or wood but that was all there was there was no, uh, no natural gas in our area at all. Later along in the early teens they had gas over on Cabin Creek that was, uh, I think the Pure Oil Company drilled that one in, (spells) S-H-O-N-K, Shonk, uh, land. They owned quite a bit of land over there and they found this oil on their land. And, uh, of course they didn't stay on Ca- on Cabin Creek very long they moved on down, but that was responsible for that refinery being put, it might still be there about a mile up, uh, Cabin Creek from the Kanawha River. And, uh, the, uh, thermostat was such that never even been thought of. To keep the fire, in order to keep your fire going from October to May you just had to build a new fire everyday if you didn't keep it banked and watched all the time.

MJG: Whose job was it to bank the fire, who banked the fire, who's, who had that [JTW: Well the, uh, ..] job?

JTW: Normally the last person going to bed.

MJG: Um, mmm.

JTW: But, uh, bedtime in those days was, uh, round nine thirty, ten o'clock. No television, no radio, uh, my dad bought, uh, uh, we had music alright, we had, he bought a phonograph with the cylindrical, uh, records. Uh, that was, uh, the uh, one that the little dog had his ear all cocked up, his master's voice, you know. That was cute and, uh, we had, we had, uh, music and, uh, one time we had, we bought a piano so my sister could take lessons.

MJG: Now where would you get things like a phonograph or a piano, uh, where would you buy these, how would you get hold . . .

JTW: Uh, we bought them at, uh, Charleston, they were sent in by freight, uh, [MJG: Um, mmm.] uh,

normally, very, very seldom now in case of a smaller item like that you could have brought it in, but I think one of the drummers brought ours up for us, uh, uh, the, uh, one of the companies we bought a great deal of merchandise from was Esque (spells) E-S-Q-U-E, Esque Smith and Cannon was the name of the corporation. And then we bought from, uh, Watts Ritter here in Huntington, and uh, the, uh, (coughs) that was about, uh, there were several others, supply houses in Charleston but I'm not familiar with their names.

MJG: What about mail order houses, what about mail order houses?

JTW: Uh, quite from us, uh, the uh, Sears Roebuck of course, uh, was, uh, giant and I'm trying to think of the one that was for the women, my, my mother use to order dresses from that, she was over sized and, and uh, Lane Bryant, Lane Bryant was the name of that [MJG: Um, mmm.] mail order house that she bought from I think, I'm not sure, I think it's in Baltimore, but I'm not sure [MJG: Um, mmm.] about it but, uh, she bought quite a bit of things from them then, uh, . .

MJG: Coming back to the house, it didn't have indoor plumbing, uh, could you tell us something about the, the privies?

JTW: The, uh, that, uh, that fella was, uh, was really something. Uh, the, normally well just to tell you the truth I personally resent the expression "rough as a cob" sincerely, the person who uses that expression does not begin to know on a morning when the temperature is five above or five below zero in the, your unheated throne room how welcome are the red and white cobs piled in the corner covered with spider webs or a sissy person may suspend them with a thread and they's swing back and forth while you were awaiting their passage [MJG: (Laughs.)]. Some folks are not delicate and allow the white cobs all be use up therefore it is necessary to use too many red ones and just to be sure another thing

you just remember the, uh, the much needed Preparation H had not been invented oth- other than a Sears Roebuck catalog, uh, what alternative was there. Some, uh, furnishings that this must room, do not forget a bucket of lime in the corner, a worn out long handle dipper to serve for, will save cleaning under your fingernails and lime when wet can cause almost anything especially rough hands. In winter don't worry about the sleet and the snow and the stuff on the street, uh, coming, snow plow coming along and splashing you and furthermore there is no street, there are no sidewalks; no sweeper and it is suggested that you be sure to remember where the mud hole was yesterday now it's covered with snow or else you might go up to your shoe tops in a nice good clean slush.

MJG: (Laughs) now where would the privy have been located?

JTW: The, uh, the privy was usually located about, uh, thirty feet to, to the rear, [MJG: Um, mmm.] uh, usually in the center of your lot or something like that. Now I tell you one thing, uh, alot of people they, they had, uh, what we call "thunder mugs" that, uh, a person used indoors and then carried out to the outhouse. Now that, uh, one at that, the neighbors always saw you going out there except at only one place that I know of that they didn't and that was at Monticello. They, Monticello the, uh, Mr. Jelser's room was, uh, hadn't been for forethought and foresight too so from the basement he had a nice, uh, covered line, I mean a covered, uh, [MJG: Top?] alleyway down to where these "thunder mugs" were bunked. So you see everybody just couldn't have one like that was all there was to it.

MJG: Now these were, were two seaters most of them, most of the privies?

JTW: Most were two seater job, [MJG: Um, mmm.] yeah.

MJG: Was there an individual one for each house in the village.

JTW: Oh yes, yeah. Each one had his own and they, uh, they normally, uh, just like everything else in, uh, around

our home. If you wanted a, a nice, uh, uh, wall window glass, not windy then you would take something and nail over the cracks to keep dry. [MJG: Uh, huh.]. Well of course they all had that, uh, nice, uh, semicircular moon up in the end, uh, to let the, uh, wasps and, and the yellow jackets in and they, they, they, those wasps and yellow jackets always preferred building their nest on the upside down side of the end, through the roof, [MJG: (Laughs.)] but I ran into that down here at, uh, down in Ohio. We went down there one time this, uh, man was from, uh, Arizona he was back over to his old home place, and uh, the house was over a hundred years old and, uh, the, uh, the outhouse was, uh, to the back just about as I say bout thirty, forty feet up just a little bit on the hill. And, uh, so I went up to see what, uh, you know, what the condition was well it was a nice outhouse alright, they had a sliding cover to cover up, uh, the, uh, one holer, the one holer. Cover up the hole when nobody was in use but up in the ceiling of that thing so help me there were, uh, about four or five hornets' nests up there that were as big as a, well at least four inches in diameter [MJG: Um, mmm.]. And just hundreds of those things, they just came in on one side and out the other, nobody bothered anybody, [MJG: (Coughs.)] just bout their business.

MJG: Could you describe the store for me, the physical layout of the store, [JTW: Yes.] what was it like?

JTW: Our store was, uh, the much better, uh, the store itself was a good forty five feet wide and, uh, more than a hundred feet long in, in addition to that parallel, uh, to the long side the office building was bout over there and, uh, they had, uh, bout four, four, six employees in there taking care of the books and the coal and everything like that. And, uh, now the, uh, they had showcases on both sides back oh, almost back oh, almost back to the, uh, at least sixty feet and then that gave us room enough there for the butcher shop, it was right straight in the middle at twelve o'clock, right down the middle there at the back. Then you went into the wareroom,

now that wareroom was about forty feet long too, it was a big thing and, uh, course we got quite a bit of merchandise in carloads, solid cars and, uh, we had a full size basement [MJG: Um, mmm.] all the way. And it was nice and dry but, and we could store almost anything down there, we'd get tomatoes, uh, canned tomatoes were and things we got by the carload and then we'd get corn and peas, we'd get a half car of each of those and, uh, beef, it always came in carloads and, uh, . .

MJG: What about flour, what about flour?

JTW: The, uh, the flour we kept on the main floor it was in a separate bin, uh, uh, wire, mesh wire, small mesh wire, uh, from the ceiling to the floor, and uh, inside we had a, a special, uh, build up false floor to keep it from any water or anything that would get underneath there and, uh, when they, they'd, uh, we'd get a carload in I always worked in the flour bin because that's where we, uh, the other fellas just simply didn't like to work in there. They, uh. . .

MJG: Can you tell me why?

JTW: Dad had, uh, uh, it was always mice and rats and it was hard, very hard to keep the things out of the flour bin so he went out and caught a nice rab-, er, blacksnake it was, uh, just, bout five feet long, and, uh, he was a beautiful thing nice and black and shiny. But the other fellas didn't take, didn't, (laughs) didn't, uh, care very much about his beautiful appearance, they didn't like the snake idea. So consequently I had to work in the flour bin, I didn't bother it and it didn't bother me and once in awhile when the door would be open it would slither out and dad would get it and, and give it a spanking with a piece of wood, put it back in the thing and I don't know whether, how much the snake resented it but, uh, he stayed there for a long, long time and then we turned him loose. It was a beautiful snake now ain't no two ways about that, but wasn't any, wasn't, most people shyed away from that [MJG: Um, mmm.] flour room there was no two ways about it. And we

also kept, uh, uh, candy in there, when the candy would come for, uh, Christmas in the buckets and, uh, and, uh, uh, thing, most of it came in wooden buckets and things like that and we had to sack it [MJG: Um, mmm.] but, uh, they was always something to do, we had eight clerks and, uh, everybody was busy all the time either making up orders to send out to the, uh, people that, uh, would come in and leave their orders, it was almost impossible for people to carry stuff very far because of the road conditions and, uh, the, well it was just like you just take your groceries and walk a half a mile. There's no sense in it when, they had, uh, the delivery truck there. Now the delivery truck was, uh, the fella own it, owned that was one of my friends. His name was, the only thing I know, heard him called was Dumper, (spells) D-U-M-P-E-R, and he got that nickname because he was, uh, up at the, uh, where the coal came out from the drift mouth out on to the, uh, what we called the head house he was in charge of dumping the coal and then take the miners check out of the bottom of the car and put it on the board which would then be turned in to the, uh, office and it, that way the man would get credit for the, the car he had loaded inside. But Dumper got hurt up there somehow, I don't remember what it was and, uh, he was, uh, a very good employee so they gave him a job of running the, uh, delivery wagon and that was my friend, I always went with Dumper. So we went, we went everywhere and, and uh, he had a little difficulty in getting on and off of the wagon in that the, uh, parcel, I mean the box of groceries to be delivered wasn't too heavy why I carried them into the house for him and, uh, so, and he would take coal to the, uh, different peoples' houses, homes too so that was, uh, that was that. But, uh, later on there came some sort of a law and, uh, the superintendent wanted, uh, some, uh, wanted a, an addition to the basement or something by the side of his house and we had to drill in solid rock and then use some, uh, bout a half stick of dynamite to get it out. And I never had driven steel and, uh, Dumper tried, uh, so I said I'll hold it and he said,

"I don't think you can hold it." But I, I did hold it a while but, uh, when it turned it wanted to go either right or left or forward or back and, uh, that wasn't very good so Dumper said, "Well I'll, I'll hold and you pound." Now he said, "Now when I put my thumb on top you don't hit." I said well Dumper allright go ahead. So I pounded and pounded and pounded, we had a ten pound sledgehammer and I was really going to town and pretty soon that poor thing put his thumb up there and I nearly busted it off. But do you know he didn't say one word, he said, "Hit that steel, hit that steel." And he made me drive for the next half an hour unmercifully, "hit that steel" and we got the hole in the ground. But that, uh, that taught me a lesson right there that, that uh, some people have control of themselves and other people don't [MJG: Um, mmm.]. But the color of his skin didn't mean anything to me, I asked him one time when I was much younger, I said Dumper why don't you wash that black stuff off your hands. And he just laughed and he laughed and he laughed and he told everybody in the camp that Buckwheat told him to wash his hands, (laughter). to wash the black spots off of his hands. And he explained to me that that was the color of his skin and he was very well satisfied and I said well how do you know when you're clean. He said when you feel clean. Well I guess Lever Brothers must have gotten hold of that [MJG: Yeah.] some years after (laughter). But that real, that was actual fact that, uh, that poor thing that took nearly half of his thumb off and, uh, and, but he didn't stop he just said, he grabbed his, uh, bandana handkerchief out of his hand, er, pocket and wrapped it around there he said "hit that steel, hit that steel." I just kept on but he was very wonderful ain't no two ways about it. I had alot of, uh, uh, the, the blacksmith was a colored man and I had, the ones that drove the, the mules in the mines several of those were black men and they were all my friends, everyone of um we just had a big time. The, uh, the mules there was about, I think there's 26, 26 or somewhere around 20, 20 some mules anyhow and the, in the stable and a man by the name of Scott

[MJG: Um, mmm.] was the stable boss and, uh, he took care of the mules very nicely but the, the men who, uh, would use them to haul the coal you see sometimes they, they didn't have, uh, well they had motors in the mines but they didn't have enough wire and everything back to the, the actual room so the, the men would tak-go back there and, uh, hook on to the car with the mule and pull it out to, uh, a siding where the motor could come and leave empties and then go back and take the loads out. But, uh, they, they had to start early in the morning to get the mules up to the mountain into the, uh, into the mine and I always wondered why they didn't keep um up on the hill but they never did, they didn't do it. Very rarely do you every find, uh, mules up on the, on, at the drift mouth or anything like that, but my dad had a 45, uh, (laughs) must have been like a pacemaker or something like that, pistol and, uh, they used that one time one of the mules got his leg broke and they brought him back down and then they, they had to kill him and I didn't have any use for that gun after that. But, we never, that was the only time I remember that gun was ever shot, [MJG: Um, mmm.] he had it for years and years.

MJG: Could we go back into the store for a minute, uh, you told me when we talked before about the cashier
[JTW: Oh yeah, let's get back to . . .] being in the center.

JTW: Leave the snake in the flour bin and we'll get back to that. Now the, uh, in the center of the, uh, store just, well it was, uh, in the center where you'd just make an x from one end to the other and that would be the center. They had, uh, a, sort of a thing stand built up, it was substantial and real nice and had a railing around it and everything like that about five feet above the floor and then they had, uh, little, uh, had wire strung up to there and little buckets on it that, uh, you pull the thing down to the bottom and it would come up to the top and, uh, they, they were quite the thing in those days, they were all over Charleston

and different places down there but, uh, they was caught you see by the angle and the wire forcing the thing up to the top so I had, uh, that's where I worked for, uh, bout, little over a year I think it was anyhow, it was quite a few months and, uh, my job was to, uh, add up and, uh, see that the prices were right, the extensions were right, and add it up and then punch the script, we had card script, we didn't use, uh, tokens or anything like that we had card script. And (coughs) I'd have to cut the script to the amount of the, [MJG: Um, mmm.] uh, sales ticket and, uh, any clerk that didn't send me up some candy when I just touched the wire with my pencil he didn't get much service [MJG: (Laughs.)]. But, uh, now the back end of it they, they had an elevator there to the, uh, basement and the, oh yes that third floor, the second floor. They had all sorts of furniture, uh, up there and mattresses, bed pillows and things like that all over the up, uh, upstairs there, oh lots of it. And, uh, then the, uh, the elevator was about, that elevator was, uh, uh, ten feet square, ten feet square and, uh, we'd load that thing down and it'd nearly drop to the bottom (laughs). I don't know kids really get into things there's no two ways about it. But it was som-it was, uh, quite a thing and then the, the always that, uh, ware room was completely full of everything because sometimes a, a train wrecked and you couldn't get, uh, a shipment of anything through for 24 to 36 hours. And then, uh, other times why we just ran out and had to wait [MJG: Um, mmm.] but, so consequently they kept (break in tape).

MJG: Part two of this interview is being conducted on 27 May 1976.

JTW: Uh, after the, uh, after our house burned at, uh, Morton the, uh, they built us another house and we stayed there for a few months and then finally the, uh, I think dad got a better offer, it may not been the same company but he moved from, uh, Morton to (spells) W-A-U-K-O-M-A, Waukoma, uh, later than Livingston and, uh, there the, uh, he was in full charge of the store there it was a nice camp and,

uh, there wasn't any chance of, uh, a flood or anything like that in that area. We were high above the creek but the, uh, they had a, a, a nice, uh, powerhouse and, uh, made, uh, lights for us, electric lights that was quite a, uh, luxury. Then, uh, he, uh, was on good terms with all of the, uh, people who came into there, the Italians came over there's about at least a hundred and twenty five of um came into there (coughs) within a short period of time (coughs). So he went, he uh, he didn't know any Italian and they didn't (laughs) know any American, English or American either so they, they began to, uh, uh, have a sort of, didn't exactly form a club but, uh, several of um would come down to the store and stand and talk with him for a long time. They'd point and he would tell um what it was, the object say like, uh, a broom or, uh, whatever just, uh, whatever they pointed at why he would tell um the English name for it. So they got to be quite, uh, uh, quite chummy and then, uh, of course we didn't handle the type food that those people were use to they liked their spaghetti and they liked chicory in their coffee and, uh, they liked, uh, olives and olive oil and all of the different things that, uh, they, so dad got in touch with the, uh, importers and, uh, boy his business went up right quick and (laughs) it's a wonder they didn't hold hold him there but, uh, we stayed there, uh, I think about, uh, somewhere around two years and, uh, . .

MJG: Before we move on from Waukoma, while you were there with this large influx of an Italian community did they have their own church, did they set up their own church?

JTW: Yes, yes they did and, uh, now ever at Boomer now on the river, uh, there is a, a church of their faith there around, [MJG: Um, mmm.] uh, huh, uh, huh. But they had meetings and, uh, they, they didn't exactly have a, build a church or anything like that but they had their meetings and they were very, uh, sincere about their faith and things of that kind.

MJG: They didn't have then a priest who lived there, they had one who traveled / JTW: I think that was right. / through the camps?

JTW: Yes sir, um, mmm. See I wasn't very old at that / MJG: Yes. / time either / MJG: Yes. / but, it, uh, the, the whole thing was very, very good, they, they uh, whole atmosphere of the camp and everything and, uh, course dad tried his best to, uh, take care of everything that came up, help um with any problem like, uh, maybe a broken window in their home or something like that. But he helped um all along then when it came to, uh, the, some of the, uh, ones they liked their bread, uh, baked in a oven their particular style so they set up two or three ovens and we had good bread for a long time, / MJG: Hum. / (laughs) they'd bring dad down a loaf of fresh bread, fresh bake. Of course we had, uh, we always had a cow and, uh, (coughs) we shared the milk and butter with um and that made for good too, but they were industrious they had their gardens and everything they really went to town on it there's no, no foolishness about those people. They got down to, uh, right down to brass tacks and they were good workers, stout backs and they loaded the coal like mad. Then, uh, . . .

MJG: Now you moved from, uh, from Waukoma next to Mucklow?

JTW: Yes, that was the, uh, at that time it was Mucklow and that later changed to Gallagher. But at that time it was Mucklow and, uh, it was, uh, you see this is the one, the place where they had a mine on each side of the valley. The one on the right as you went, or you'd either say up the creek or down the creek, / MJG: Um, mmm. / that, uh, east or west didn't matter. But, uh, the one on the right hand side as you went up the creek was, uh, Standard Mine and the one on the left was, uh, Paint Creek, called Paint Creek. And Standard was owned by a group of people, it hadn't been in operation too long, well I guess it had been quite a while too when we got there but they had some little cars, uh, railroad cars that, uh, that held about 25 or 30 ton made

of wood and, uh, two wheels under each end and they were called "buckjimmies." They were called "buckjimmies" and, uh, they, the C&O hauled them down to Pratt and there they were dumped into, uh, river barges then the, on the otherside the, uh, the left side going up the creek course was Paint Creek and, uh, it kept getting bigger and better all the time the, there's, uh, good seam way back in the mountain and, uh, they knew it was there so they began to put the money to it and, uh, they had, uh, a first class incline that, that's main thing there, the, the incline of those things cause the coal had to stay on those tracks in those cars when it came down the hill there was no two ways about it. And, uh, once in a while a wind or something would blow over and wreck the car but not very often. Then, uh, as it got bigger they put monitors on that held about eight to ten tons in it each and of course the load pulled the empty up the hill. They had a bin at the top where the, uh, the, uh, small cars coming out of the mine usually held about a ton and a half or two ton and they were dumped into this big bin at the top and then loaded the monitors from there. The large steel cables they, uh, were after, well they lasted several years but when they begin to wear they didn't, uh, they didn't take any chance, I don't remember one of our monitors ever got away however, there were instances in the field where the monitor did break loose and tear the tippie down, brought um down to the bottom. But, uh, none of ours did and they would inspect the cable quite often both the fastening and the consistancy along the line because it dragged on the ground all the time, and uh, then, uh, they would use that to make, uh, swinging bridges

[MJG: Um, mmm.] across the creeks, different places and so they didn't lose so very much there the, they would, uh, after you put one of those, uh, cables in it for a swinging bridge it was good for twenty five or thirty years. They was really good, Then, uh, the, uh, the men, let's see, uh, why the, bout uh, the saddest part of, uh, things, I don't know why those things always come up to me but the, the, uh, every once in a

while maybe twice a year we'd have a slate fall. In otherwords the, uh, uh, the, uh, the post, the, that they had to hold up the roof gave way and on many occasion it just flatten the individual out to the height of about a two and a half inch rail. Bout all there was left of him just, just flat, just (makes clapping sound) compressed like that between the pl-the floor and the roof where it fell. A steel rail is all it held up then they had to dig him out of there and, uh, lots of, lots of times there'd be two and occasionally three men in one of those slate falls. But I can still remember the, the nights when those, uh, things, they'd bring the men down the hill on a loaded car and, uh, they walked there'd be four to six men around the, the car that they had them on on a stretcher and, uh, (clears throat) bring em down the hill and that was the, one of the saddest things, sad as anything can get because those poor individuals they didn't have anything, they had life and they enjoyed themselves as much as they could but actually it was really painfully pitiful to know what the, uh, the family of that individual was to suffer. The, the man was gone there were no, no, uh, uh, way to compensate um or anything to amount to any great degree. Now the possibility, I don't remember whether the company gave them, uh, uh, money or not but I, [MJG: I don't believe so.] I don't remember they did [MJG: No.] anytime, no and so consequently the, the, uh, the wife with, uh, what children left the camp and went to join her family in another area usually that was the thing. But to see those lights, uh, just gradually descending the mountain and knowing what it was there it just got to me awful, course my mother cried all the time and things like that but, uh, it, it sure did leave a mark on me too [MJG: Um, mmm.]. Another one, another one of tragedy that, uh, I saw but I don't think, uh, very many people in the camp saw. This, uh, lineman, telephone lineman climbed a pole to, uh, add another wire and he got up to the top of the pole and, uh, I suppose he didn't notice that the thing was rotted off down at the bottom but, uh, as he moved at the top the pole began to

move back and forth and then it begin to circle and, uh, uh, in just no time at all it had broken the other wire and he fell to the ground and he made the, the pole fell in one general direction and he went around the pole at least three times on the way down, I saw that. And that was, uh, uh, one of the things that, that uh, you know pitiful thing and course instatly I was, oh I guess a hundred yards away or something like that and soon as I saw it I flew into the store and told dad and all the rest of um, they called the hospital and they put the man on a wagon or on a truck rather they had, uh, sometimes they had a, a handcar sort of a truck that, uh, they would take um and they took him down to, uh, Hansford at the hospital, the Sheltering Arms Hospital at Hansford. It was real nice the, they had good doctors there and nurses and all of um were country people and they looked after their patients there wasn't too much money in it for anybody. Of course they got paid but, uh, extortion was, uh, (laughs) not heard of at that time I don't think. But, uh, that, uh, that fella come down that pole that, that was something. He, he did he just went around like that / MJG: Um, mmm. / (makes loud clap) bam! But it didn't kill him, took him down to the hospital patched him up he was down there two or three months. Then, uh, uh, another tragedy was the, one of the mules, we had about twenty, twenty some, uh, mules in our stable and, uh, the, uh, Mr. Scott was the stable boss. So, uh, Mr. Scott looked after the mules and he was very kind to them, he fed them and groomed them and took care of um they, uh, didn't just bring them down off the hill. You see they had, each morning the men that drove the mules had to get to the stable earlier and then take the mule up the mountain and into the mine, work him all day and then bring him back and put him into a stable. Of course he got a little extra time for it but, uh, a mule driver going up a side of a mountain and the temperatures about zero and about a foot of snow on the ground it wasn't exactly the best job in the country. But, uh, they, uh, everybody worked at it. But one time one of the

mules broke the, got his leg somehow, I think he got it between the two cars in the mine broke the poor thing's leg and, uh, they brought him down the hill that afternoon and the, uh, we didn't have a veterinarian in that area at all, there wasn't any such things as a veterinarian but our company doctor examined him and, uh, he decided that it would be just almost an impossibility to take care of the mule so they borrowed dad's gun. It was a, a forty five, uh, I don't know what the name of that thing was, must have been a colt, may've been a colt. You put your finger in the end of it [MJG: Um, mmm.] he was that big (laughs) so they borrowed dad's forty five and shot the mule in the head and I didn't like that either. But, uh, that, uh, that was some of the things that went on there at, at uh, Mucklow just . . .

MJG: Now while you were living there, while you were living there, uh, the battle of Mucklow took place, [JTW: Yeah, um, mmm.] now could you describe that for us, you s-you saw much, much of what happened?

JTW: Well the, uh, of course, uh, uh, (coughs) when it comes right down to brass tacks I wasn't paying much attention to politics or organizations or anything else in those days, the only thing I p-paid attention to was, uh, where the fish should be and, uh, the creek, this little creek back of our house, it was, uh, a nice little thing and just the nice pure water and everything like that and we'd take a pole about six feet long and put in the pond or in the pool and jump the other side sometimes you made it and sometimes you didn't. That was alright too but, uh, the, it was most fun than anything. And of course the flowers and things like that, that was what I paid most attention to for as the other things were concerned. Now Mother Jones, an international known, uh, organaser, organizer came to our camp on two occasions. Now, uh, as I said I didn't pay much attention to any of that, thing like that but I did see her up on the stand addressing the men one time. But that was it and then the next

time I believe was after, uh, she was up there but I don't think, we may have been over at Smithers
[MJG: Um, mmm.] or someplace else. But she quite active in that area up there, uh, off and on for years, [MJG: Yes.] and uh, of course the, uh, company folks didn't like it very much but they didn't try to do too much about it either. They'd write bad things about her in the paper but, uh, sometimes she'd said um and sometimes she hadn't (laughs). You can always fan the flame, uh, uh, the, the embers into the flame if you have enough wind. So, uh, they, uh, uh, this, uh, thing had been coming up for sometime. They'd been, uh, several months, uh, several weeks or months that, uh, the production was down in the mines and everybody was on edge and the, uh, the tension was high and finally they just decided that, uh, that they'd bring in the guards, the Baldwin Felt Guards to protect the company profiting. Well I think actually if they'd left those fellas out of there that it, things would have been a whole lot better so they didn't decide
[MJG: Um, mmm.] that way, they brought um in. And, uh, then they brought, uh, uh, ...

MJG: Where did the guards stay in the camp, where did the guards stay in the camp?

JTW: They stayed at, uh, there was, uh, uh, what we call the club house, uh, at the upper end of the camp, uh, just back of middle patch, uh, middle patch was down that parallel or on the plain with the railroad and then the, uh, the club house, I think it must have had about 14, 16 rooms in it maybe not that much but it was a good size thing and, uh, this lady that ran it, I don't recall her name but anyhow, uh, she ran that, uh, club house for, oh quite a number of years. That, uh, took care of, uh, visiting officials and, uh, in this care the, uh, the guards and things like that there may've been, uh, another, there was another house up there on that same, uh, little plateau but, uh, they had furnished that, uh, put the men over there also, [MJG: Um, mmm.] they ate over at the club house. But, uh, I don't remember there must have been about 15 of um all together and, uh, somewhere around there. And they had um at the

uh, mine entrances and down at the bottom of the, of the tipples and things like that to see that, uh, there wasn't any, you know, real dirt and tearing up property and things like that. The, uh, they didn't bother anybody, they very seldom held a discussion with anybody of course the, uh, some of the youngsters, the teenagers they would hurl some very, very, uh, uh, nasty remarks in their direction and then scoot but, uh, I, I wasn't in on that. I kept out of that. The, uh, the fact that, uh, looks like that the store man was in between the company and the men all the time, uh, you had to please the company and you had to please the people. We just kept right in the middle of the road.

MJG: What did the miners think of, of your father at Mucklow? During the battle you told me in our
 [JTW: Oh.] previous conversation . . .

JTW: Well, uh, about, uh, two days before the battle practically it just seemed that everybody just evaporated from the camp. A lot of the men took their families out on the, uh, on the train and, uh, the trains ran, uh, steadily up and down and the, uh, the supply trains came up of course up until this particular time they'd been loading some coal. But, not, uh, only about 30% or something like that and then they began to close down and, uh, as I say some of the men took their families out to relatives along the river. But, uh, uh, I don't know the men, uh, had a, a high esteem of dad all the time they was no two ways about that. And he had treated them right, that was a big thing in his favor course he did that to everybody all his life anyhow. Then on this, uh, particular time Mr. Scott who was in charge of the stable he took his family and went down to, uh, someplace on the river to visit his folks. So that left no one to take care of their mules so dad had to take care of the mules as well as the store and, uh, course they were others in the store too but, uh, he had to look after the mules, did look after the mules and, uh, on this, uh, particular day it, uh, it had gotten around that, uh, there just liable to be a mighty big battle

so on this particular morning (laughs) mother took her two kids and we crawled under the house next, down in next to the, uh, next to the chimney and, uh, so that if they, anybody did shoot down that way well maybe we'd be safe. And, uh, so dad got up at his regular time and, and built the fire in the stove and went out and went over and fed the, uh, fed and watered the mules, came back and, uh, then he, uh, after he got back he, uh, they had breakfast and things like that and he did just ordinary things around the house and then went up to the store for a while. But he did, there wasn't anything done and evidently the tension was pretty much in, maybe somebody told him to go home I don't know, but uh, in the meantime the, uh, the uh, guards had built themselves a fortress up, just down from the, uh, the, uh, clubhouse at the foot of this little hill. The clubhouse is maybe 40 feet or 50 feet up on the hill and they rode up there and they built this little, they took, uh, uh, cross ties, uh, green cross ties and stacked um so that they would have protection and, uh, then they fixed it so that they had almost a 360 degree well actually it did, when they did moved the thing he'd go 360, it'd go 180 and then 180. So, uh, they, uh, they were pretty comfortable in there for a while anyhow.

MJG: What kinds of weapons did they have, what kind of weapons did they have?

JTW: Well the, uh, the, they had, uh, let's see they had lever action Winchesters the guards had and, uh, then they had this, uh, Gatling Gun and, uh, course that was the first time I ever heard of one of those things and it, it was really, uh, uh, a fine piece of machinery I guess because they'd ring it, uh, the bell would get hot and they run that thing until the bell got hot, so hot that they're afraid the bullets would stick in it and then they'd let it up then when they let up why the other men started in with their, uh, Winchesters, rifles and, uh, they sprayed the woods in every direction. Now when this, uh, Gatling Gun was in action it'd, uh, and then when they stopped you could hear the trees

splitting. It, uh, uh, maybe they'd, uh, just crack and pop you know, like they do up north when it's cold they say. But anyhow it was, uh, it was a nice battle but, uh, only one bullet landed in our yard. And it was from a direction that, uh, uh, you'd estimated and know that it was a stray and, uh, some of the men told dad later on they just told him exactly what he did, what time it was, where he was and what he did and he said, uh, said John you could have been picked off a dozen times but he said nobody wanted to hurt you. And, uh, so that was the way it was that morning. Now that was my mother's birthday on the 26 of July and I'm not, I'm not sure whether that was 1911 or 12, / MJG: 1912. / it was right along in that period. And, uh, so . . .

MJG: What happened to the store, what hap-were they, you said they didn't / JTW: Oh. / fire there at the house did, / JTW: Oh they hit . . . / did they fire at the store?

JTW: They hit almost everything, uh, all of the, well naturally the biggest part of their fire was drawn by this, uh, this, uh, where this Gatling Gun was, uh, uh, in place, in placement there. But, they, uh, they rid, (laughs) they riddled the top of that store, had to put all sorts of, uh, patches on it to keep the rain out and the, the uh, were good size plate glasses, those plate glasses in there were ten by ten or better, / MJG: Um, mmm. / uh, and several of um and maybe fire by ten but, uh, big glasses. And there wasn't a glass, piece of glass left and then inside where they hit that pine floor and it, course it had a, a oak subfloor and they hit that pine floor and one of those bullets would, would uh, go down in there and there'd be a splinter stick up about eight feet, eight inches above the, the floor and it was the funniest looking thing you ever saw looked, uh, umm, well like, uh, shucked a ear of corn I think / MJG: Um, mmm. / you getting ready to leave the leaves on it. But it was funny, uh, to a degree there. But there, oh fifty or sixty shots in, in the store and through the ceiling and, uh, the roof and things like that but, uh, as I say

I think the, uh, the biggest part of it these fellas was on the hill, on the mountain they had, uh, uh, uh, binoculars and, uh, uh, what is it, spy glasses. And, uh, some of um would sit there and they'd, uh, pin out a man and, and uh, pretty soon they'd, uh, concentrate their fire on him. Well then as the, as they did that why then he would, he would naturally get out of there pretty quick, just as quick as he could. The, uh, it lasted I think about two hours, two hours and a half. And, uh, for years after that up on the mountain you'd find, uh, uh, what we called puddles, the kids would find um, the cartridges of these, uh, the, the shells I mean of these, uh, that these people had used, the miners had used and they was quite a collectors' item there for a while.

MJG: How did your mother react to the battle?

JTW: How's that?

MJG: How did your mother react to the battle?

JTW: Well, uh, (coughs) having been poor all of our lives our sympathy was definately, uh, had to be, uh, fifty fifty with the people. We realized their problems, mother and dad were very, very good to them, they, they uh, shared their, the milk and the butter and, uh, eggs and whenever sickness hit the camp why mom was there to help somebody and, uh, the doctor, uh, was, uh, he was very, uh, humanitarian also he looked after the, the people but you know so many times we heard about things around Pittsburgh and places like that where people came in from other countries and they settled down and they just treated them like dogs but our parents never were, never did deteriorate any way near that, uh, uh, they, we had a church and, uh, we went to church every, almost every Sunday morning. If we didn't we went down to, uh, to visit the folks down on the river but most of the time we went to church and they had, uh, dad belonged to the Knights of Pythias and, uh, I don't remember, they had Oddfellows and Redman there too but I don't remember whether he, I know he belonged to the, uh, (break in tape). . . . good look at it and decided

that we needed a trapeze out in the barn, called it a barn wasn't a barn just a storehouse. So I got busy and we, the uh, other kids and I, er, I don't know where that mattress came from but we got a mattress and (laughs) put, put that on the floor and actually all of us, uh, did quite, uh, number of stunts on that broom handle (laughs) it's a wonder we hadn't broken our necks. But we didn't and, uh, we had alot of fun [MJG: Um, mmm.] out of that and we even made a porch up about four feet off the floor and one guy would get up there and swing and, and go way out you know, and then try to turn a flip flop and land on that mattress. I don't know how we got without breaking arms and legs and everything else but it didn't and, uh, we kept that up for, uh, quite a while the, uh, my grandparents didn't pay much attention to it actually I don't think they knew what was going on out there. But, uh, we had no difficulty and, and uh, that, that's one thing about alot of the kids I, uh, associated with but only one or two times I lost my temper and, and, and paid for it later on [MJG: (Laughs).] with a good spanking. But, uh, the, uh, we, we argue, we just argue to beat the dickens but, uh, then it was all over [MJG: Um, mmm.] and we'd concentrate on what next we were to do. I suppose that goes on teen, the uh, teenage gangs now just same as it did then but, uh, they have different, uh, things to argue about then we did. But, uh, the, (coughs) the gymnasium was, then the wheel on the side of the house that was a, that was really something (laughter) one way of passing away time.

MJG: Yes, now you moved next to Kayford, how did Kayford get it's name?

JTW: Wait just a minute here, let's see if there's that, oh, uh, one thing about, uh, this, uh, place over here before we go to Kayford, [MJG: Carbondale.] uh, the uh, uh, school, it was a four room, two story school. And it was full of kids, I'm telling you they had a million and a half kids in that place. But, uh, the, uh, the teachers were all good but,

uh, somehow the, the uh, there was always a faction in there of youngsters that, uh, never could get, uh, settled they always were in the air about something and they just, uh, I suppose it was because, uh, uh, they, uh, wanted something that, uh, they didn't have or couldn't have and they were always at, uh, air of, uh, I don't know exactly, uh, militants or whatever you call it but, uh, it would be, uh, they didn't try to fight anybody it was just a resentment that, uh, they had for the school and the teachers and they was no particular reason for that because the teachers were good people and they tried to handle um the best they could, / MJG: Were these miners' children? / every once in a while they'd have to have somebody come in and set um all down.

MJG: Now were these miners' children?

JTW: Yes, um, mmm. They were all miners' children, uh, except the, uh, uh, except three, the three oldest of the Backus and I think myself and, and uh, I'm not sure I think Dot went there too, she was just starting in, maybe, maybe not but anyhow, uh, it lasted, uh, the full time and then when we moved to Kayford things were entirely different up there we had a nice school, good teachers and, uh, everybody got along real well in our class there were no two ways about that. This, uh, the house that we had was, uh, down at the end and that, that's pretty descriptive idn't it / MJG: (Laughs). /? Uh, up the store is always a main center of attraction in a coal camp. And, uh, the people would go there and, uh, congregate and they'd, uh, politic and tell jokes and stories and things of that kind and, uh, the funny part about it is that so many of those jokes and things came up time after time and not, uh, not the same ones. They were always different, they were r-really good. But we lived about five down and up. And, uh, down (coughs) from, uh, about, uh, hundred yards, no not a hundred yards that'd been down our front yard, uh, just a short distance below the, the uh, where the club house was where John Armstrong's mother ran the cl, er, er, ran the club house. She was a widow and, uh, uh, she really did

have meals, quite frequently we'd go up there on Sunday instead of staying at home. But, uh, that was just to give mom a rest not, not particularly because the food was so much better. Well then, uh, the, uh, another thing at Kayford, I went to s-oh the store was a big store it had about, uh, ten or twelve, uh, men in it and it was a really a big one because the, uh, they had, uh, there must have been, uh, must have been three hundred men up there / MJG: Um, mmm. / in the mines, maybe more than that and, and three hundred men means at least a hundred and eighty to two hundred families. And, uh, they had to keep um all supplied with everything there were no two ways about that. But, uh, (clears throat) and that was the last place up the creek / MJG: Um, mmm. / Uh, down below there, down below Kayford at Leewood the, uh, railroad branched and, uh, uh, instead if you came straight ahead you'd come to Kayford, if you went just, uh, to the right the railroad began to climb the hill and climbed up until it was, uh, quite a distance up on the hill and then went through a tunnel over on to Coal River / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, out to a place called Dorothy, (spells) D-O-R-O-T-H-Y. And they were coal camps all along out through there. But the main way, uh, to get the, uh, cars, empty cars out there was up through Kayford and, uh, at that time they had, uh, uh, Shea engines. The, uh, now those are, have, uh, on one side they have quite a few, uh, pistons and, uh, operate up and down usually four to six and they operate up and down at a very fast speed and, uh, you'd think that they were going ninety miles an hour when they're actually only going about four. But they have a terrific, uh, power, uh, to, uh, traction, the traction was great and, uh, so they pulled the, uh, the empty cars up that way, but uh, it would take anywhere from at four miles an hour you can imagine what, and they were loud / MJG: Um, mmm. / just make all kinds of noise and sometimes you wouldn't be able to sleep, uh, while the train was going over the hill. The cars themselves didn't make any noise but the engines they was really rough. Now they got two of um on there well then you had a circus there was no two ways

about that. Later on they put, uh, uh, two engines in front and one behind and, uh, then, er, sometimes they'd put um the other way, one in front and two behind to push the empties up / MJG: Um, mmm. / that was after they got, uh, heavier duty and more powerful engines and that, uh, would just about the end of the Shea engines however, they came into good use up about Cass, West Virginia, up in there and, uh, other places where they had extremely heavy grades. That grade over there I imagine must have been about twelve percent, / MJG: Um, mmm. / it was really a rough big one (coughs).

MJG: Can you tell me something about your friends at Kayford?

JTW: Yes the, uh, we were lucky there we had more kids to play with the, uh, the, uh, general superintendent was, uh, uh, Josiah Keely, Josiah Keely and his wife, I don't remember what Miss Keely's name was, at this time anyhow. Then they had two children, uh, Robert and, uh, Francis, uh, Robert I think turned out to be a banker and Francis married a man from East India course that was about 15 years later, she met him over at one of the universities in the east, private school over there, / MJG: Um, mmm. / and uh, she married him though, but we never could forget, (laughs) get her across from the color line (laughter). And, uh, yet there was no color line well anyhow, we had those two and John Armstrong, uh, he was the son of Mrs. Armstrong ran the club house and, uh, uh, Ross Tuttle, (spells) T-U-T-T-L-E, he uh, lived with his grandmother and went to school, uh, I think she, she had been widowed some, some long time before and then this boy came back to live with her to keep her company. Then there was sis and I and, uh, then the store gang was, uh, uh, Robert, uh, let's see I got Robert Keely, Ross Tuttle, Kendall, Kendall Baker. Now Kendall, uh, his father was the store manager and dad was a clerk, and, uh, that was the only time that, you know, well he was assistant manager over at Carbondale but, uh, that was the only time he ever served as just clerk, there was another man

in between him and the, and the man up there. And, uh, so these four, uh, we had, uh, really had some good times there was no two ways about it. We all loved the same thing, climbed the hills climbing trees and, uh, uh, trying to find plants and flowers that the others didn't know anything about, it was really wonderful there was no two ways about it but, uh, Miss Keely, uh, as I say she was a, a highly educated lady and, and tried to make the best of the, the deal of being up Paint Creek instead of being with society in Charleston (laughter) and so we benefited from it. She organized, now her home was, uh, an outstanding, uh, edifice in the whole community for miles around. The, uh, she was the general superintendent's wife so they had, uh, uh, walnut and other type floor that, uh, the, along the order of Parkay but did not exactly the same thing and they were absolutely beautiful

∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ and, uh, they had, had them polished and, uh, waxed and everything like that so Mrs. Keely, uh, would have, uh, card games for the wives, uh, during the week and then on the weekends she would have all the kids in for, uh, dancing ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠. Virginian Reel and, uh, waltz, that was very good and that was awfully nice of her of course, uh, at first I didn't like the ideal of dancing but, uh, you know, the closer you got to girls the more interest there was in dancing ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ so we got, uh, we got along pretty good and then, then uh, . .

MJG: What kind of music did you have?

JTW: They had, uh, uh, either piano or this, uh, the, uh, uh, music box ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ they had, uh, records on, cylindrical records in their music box ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠. And we got our, uh, first one after we moved down to, uh, Gallagher, ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ we didn't have any, uh, records up to that time I don't believe, I'm pretty sure we didn't ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ but we got a, a nice one there. It came out of Charleston the, uh, but there were, that uh, set quite a few winter evenings off in good shape and the, the uh, families would

all congregate and we'd have, uh, maybe, uh, something to eat on the side but not very often, maybe coffee or hot chocolate / MJG: Um, mmm. / . Something along that line and cookies and homemade different kinds of homemade cookies and bread and things along that line. But it was really a, a magnificent thing for her to, uh, share her edifice as well as her companionship with / MJG: Um, mmm. / the rest of us, I thought that was very nice and, uh, I don't, we lost track of um after we, uh, came to Huntington. I don't know where, as I said I think Bob turned out to be a banker and, uh, Francis married that, uh, fella and went overseas. Now the, uh, as far as the other kids are concerned we were, uh, just like all the rest of the Indians we'd have baseball games, one time I got mad at Ross Tuttle he hit me with the ball and I threw a baseball bat at him and hit him on the shin and did he howl / MJG: Hum. / and I went out and I said you shut up or I'm going to bust you in the nose / MJG: (Laughs). / and that made him howl that much more. Well then mother came to the door, "John, will you please come here." Yes mam, so I went over. "And what did you do?" I said Ross Tuttle hit me with the ball and I hit him with the baseball bat. "Uh, go to your room, I'll let you know when to come out," / MJG: (Laughs). / . That was it but, (laughs) oh, uh, and uh, that, uh, that house when we moved in there it had to be as clean as a pen so my mother was cleaning the floors and the floor was damp and I cam in and for some reason I was suppose to turn the light on in the middle of the room. They's hanging from the middle of the room in those days, that's all there was there, there are no switches. And so I reached up and got that thing, I was barefooted and the floor was damp and that was my first real contact with / MJG: (Laughs). / a hundred and ten volts and believe you me it was enough, / MJG: I'm sure. / big wet floor, / MJG: Um, mmm. / barefooted, oh boy. And I, (laughs) I shyed away from electricity / MJG: Um, mmm. / for a long, long time. Then, uh, uh, climbing hills and things like that, uh, one time we were headed up to the top to see what we could tun into and we didn't worry much about what it was course, uh, one of the things was, was to find

something that the other fella didn't know about, / MJG: Um, mmm. / different type flower, different type, uh, bush or the, uh, anything that the other didn't know anything about even a grub worm. So, uh, Baker had the, uh, uh, scout ax, I think that was my scout ax and, uh, we were climbing a hill so there was a, they had sawed a tree off and I put my hand up on top of that to pull myself up and just as I put it up there Baker came down with that scout ax and cut about a, oh about a quarter to a half inch off the end of my finger. And, uh, as I remember later I didn't even yell, I didn't do anything, I didn't freeze, I didn't, uh, get mad or anything in time, I just grabbed it right back where it was cut and took off down the hill to the doctor's office. And less then ten minutes, (laughs) twenty minutes it was all over the camp / MJG: Um, mmm. / Baker cut Walton's, Baker cut John Walton's fam-er, finger off.

MJG: Now there was a doctor then right in / JTW: Oh yeah. / the camp?

JTW: Always, yeah, in those big camps they always had a resident doctor / MJG: Um, mmm. / took care of any situation there's no two ways about it. And there were no cost to it that I, they may have paid fifty cents or a dollar a month through their checks I'm not / MJG: Um, mmm. / positive, but uh, the biggest part of the time the company provided the doctors, / MJG: Um, mmm. / and they were good men too, the ones we had were, uh, uh, (clears throat) the one that brought, uh, sis into the world her, that was Dr., uh, Musgrave and then, uh, the, uh, other one that we had, uh, at, uh, I think he was both at Mucklow and Gallagher, now they, they would work two or three of these small camps and Holley Grove, there wasn't anything down at Holley Grove but a bunch of, uh, houses where people lived and worked in the mines also they / MJG: Um, mmm. / owned their own ground down there. But, uh, they didn't, couldn't own the ground up in the, in the camps but, uh, quite a few and, uh, one of our cousins, uh, Willy Hope, (spells) H-O-P-E, uh, he was, he loved

the soil. He loved the ground, he loved to see things grow and he established a green house there that furnished thousands upon thousands upon thousands of plants to, uh, people, uh, one of our friends has a, uh, his brother is in the, uh, up at Canton, Ohio / MJG: Um, mmm. / in the, uh, park board up there and he use to come down quite frequently and visit Willy and, uh, order quite a few thousand plants of his and he also had a, uh, magnificent garden and just everything. And he kept that up for, uh, I think he must have died around in the, uh, early part of the sixties / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, but that, uh, just happened to think of that. That was at Holley Grove and other than that there wasn't any, wasn't any industry there or anything like that / MJG: Um, mmm. / but nice little town where people could live and, and nice and quiet.

MJG: Speaking of Holly Grove, did you ever encounter, uh, the Bull Moose Special, the, the train built here by the C&O, uh, that took part in the Holley Grove Massacre in 1913, did you ever see or hear anything of, of it?

JTW: I didn't quite get the first part.

MJG: There was a train built here in Huntington / JTW: Um, mmm. / called the Bull Moose Special / JTW: Um, mmm. / and it was a armored train.

JTW: No, now that, uh, I don't remember that that, that must have operated more on, on Cabin Creek / MJG: Yes. / then it did on Paint Creek because, uh, I had heard about that train but I don't think I, now they had, uh, yes I did too. They was one car on the, uh, Paint Creek train for, uh, a period of time that had, uh, uh, half inch sheet steel inside and they had some port holes on the outside, / MJG: Um, mmm. / yes, but not the regular train, now the other, the uh, train itself was, uh, that was a different job, / MJG: Yes. / that was a different job / MJG: Um, mmm. / as well as I remember. But we did have that on Paint Creek but it didn't look, didn't make very many trips up there / MJG: Um, mmm. / the, uh, the other camps

above us the Gallagher was, uh, the shooting at Gallagher was the heaviest in our section. Now the one on over on to the Crawdad Mountain, uh, and on over into, uh, Cabin Creek and then on over in to, uh, uh, Logan and those places, / MJG: Blair Mountain. / yeah, yeah. But, and they was, uh, the scene that, uh, the men in our area, uh, went along with, uh, the biggest part of the arrangements that the others made. And that kept, uh, made things pretty quiet / MJG: Um, mmm. / for us, yeah that's right. I'd forgotten about that armored car but it did, it did run on the, uh, on the, uh, uh, line, on the Paint Creek / MJG: Um, mmm. / line there for several trips. Maybe, uh, maybe 15 days or something / MJG: Um, mmm. / like that, I don't know exactly / MJG: Um, mmm. / but, uh, it was on there.

MJG: Now after you moved from Kayford you went to Quarrier . . .

JTW: Yeah, uh, uh, Quarrier, uh, oh Kayford was named for two men, uh, Kay and Ford that's the way they got their name, Kayford. Now Quarrier was named for a family also, uh, the Quarriers and the, there's one street in Quarrier in Charleston, Quarrier Street that's the only Quarrier Street, or was in the world, (laughs) no other street in the world named Quarrier except that one I know of. But anyhow, the, uh, there was a small, uh, mine, however we'd put out as many as, uh, five cars a day sometimes, and sometimes six, six times fifty is three hundred ton, that's pretty good / MJG: Um, mmm. /. Now Quarrier was a, a unusual thing, it uh, was built, uh, with no, the machinery for the mine was pneumatic. They had a, a air compression station in the holler about a quarter a mile below the store on the same side of the creek but it was, uh, back in away from, uh, any high water or anything, when the flood came along later on while we were at Quarrier it did not get to the, uh, pump, the air pump station and, uh, they had the, the uh, the, that was a special type of, uh, machinery evidently it was very efficient / MJG: Um, mmm. / they did a nice job. Then, uh, the, uh, uh, dad was the only one in the

store there and mother would go over, we live exactly across the road from, uh, where the store was. Now the front porch of the store was almost even with the railroad and on our side it was about nearly four feet from the top of the rail down to the to, to where the water would run down into the culvert / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, across there. Now the mine foreman lived, uh, on our right and then we and the, uh, uh, one of the, uh, must have been the assistant mine foreman or something like that. There wasn't any other person in the, uh, bookkeeper or anything like that. Well anyhow we lived there and, uh, had a very nice life. And down below there just about where the pump station was which is on the, uh, which would be, we'll call it the north side of the track and on the south side was where the store was / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, there was a big field down there about, uh, it must have been, uh, round a hundred and fifty yards long and, uh, maybe forty to seventy five feet wide and dad use to put him a garden down there and oh boy did I hate that thing, man oh man, I didn't mind putting it in so much but when it came to getting those darn potatoes out of the ground it wasn't so good. But I didn't / MJG: (Laughs). / mind the green beans, and the pole beans especially, pole beans are about twelve, fourteen inches long oh it was, you know, / MJG: Um, mmm. / real joy and you just stack those up on your arm, that wasn't so bad. But when it came to digging potatoes, oh man and that sun get hot, oh dear me / MJG: (Laughs). / but he had everything in there, corn and beans, and potatoes, pole beans, bunch beans and everything. It was really good. And he gave, what'd he'd do, he just give it all away what mother didn't put up why he gave it to the neighbors and everything like that but there was plenty of it. Now, uh, I had a little dog, I never had owned a dog before and somebody gave me a little dog but, and I called him Buster, and it was white, just as white as it could be. So we were over to the store one morning a train came down through there about nine thirty or ten o'clock and we were over at the store one morning and the train came down the road and Buster took out to go over home right under the train and the train cut him right half in two, / MJG: Um, mmm. /

that was bad. Then I had to take Buster and put him in a, I think I used a, a powder keg, put him in it and took him over next to the creek to where we use to go and dug a hole and put him in it. It was a long time before it was any fun around

∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠. While we were at Quarrier dad bought me a, a, one of the first of the daisy pump guns, air rifle. It come on the market and he bought me one and, uh, I didn't like to kill birds, I did do a dirty trick one time though, I shot a red bird and I had a cat that all I had to do was whistle and the cat would come. Well I shot that red bird and I whistled for the cat and the cat came and got it and mom saw the cat with the red bird and blamed it on the red bird and I never did clear the cat

∠ MJG: (Laughs). ∠. And, (laughs) and, then other, other uh, pastime we, uh, was hunting snakes over along the creek, now the creek came down, uh, it was over back of the store quite a bit and, uh, they was good fresh water and nice and clean but, uh, you go along there and the solid rock almost perpendicular and the snakes couldn't get out. They'd come along down through there and they couldn't get out. So I had, that was my pastime, uh, hunting snakes

∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠. And then, uh, one time we, uh, I came home from school in the afternoon and I had just gotten a pair of boy scout shoes, they were the one with the Panko sole, uh, on um and it was, oh it was a fine shoe and nice, it was really allright. I liked it very much so mother was over at the store and pop was over to the store so I got the pistol out and began to have myself a show. And, uh, I took all of the cartridges out and was twisting it around on my finger and snapping it and, and uh, seeing how fast I could get the, uh, the, uh, cylinder out and all of that sort of thing and, uh, there was a thirty two, wasn't a very powerful gun but it was a thirty two, uh, Smith and Wesson I think So, uh, I had see the silent movie these guys, you know, that could take

∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ a gun and make it go around on one finger well I was practicing up on that so bout that time I thought well now they'll be home in just a few minutes so I better put this thing away, well I loaded it up and how or why I

pulled that handle back I'll never know. But I pulled the handle back and then got exactly the stance that I should have to let it loose and that darn thing slipped out from under my finger and there was a terrible explosion and boy here came the parents over across the (laughs) road faster than you'd think. Well now my first impression, what'd you gonna do, cover it up, cover it up, there's a hole in the floor cover it up. Mister I threw that gun up on the bed and got down on my hands and knees and I hunted and hunted and hunted and I couldn't find the bullet and all the time my, uh, the blood was getting squashy inside my shoe but that didn't matter I was off trying to find that bullet hole to cover it up. Well by that time here came the folks, what did you do? Well the gun went off. Well how, what in the world you doing fooling with the gun. I said I was just practicing and, uh, /MJG: (Laughs)./ so it went from bad to worst and they didn't paddle me but they, uh, dad called the doctor and here came the doctor and he had to put some iodine on, uh, a swab, made a, on a, you know, pinchers and shoved it through one side and then shoved it back through the other and that was all there was to it (laughs). But that was the first time I ever got shot, /MJG: Um, mmm./ then, uh, yeah. But, uh, the gun wasn't available anymore for /MJG: Um, mmm./ a long time, /MJG: I can well understand that./ and I had strict you're gonna catch it if you, if I catch you with that gun there's no two ways about that. So then came the flood about that time, course, oh you know how things goes from here to there and worst but the, uh, the flood, it had rained about three consecutive days very hard and steady and the creek had swollen and it was out, almost out of it's banks and on this particular night, uh, above Dakota (break in tape). Uh, wait a minute, turn it off (break in tape). The, uh, the, you see up in, in those creeks you had bout, uh, maybe a hundred and fifty yards between the hills and most places it idn't that wide but, uh, you don't have much of an advantage, uh, to the weather predictions or anything like that, uh, actually during the day

there's only about just a few hours of sunlight and, uh, then when there comes a rain it just comes over to the top of the hill and right on top of um fore you know it. Now it had rained about (microphone interference) three days in there before any, uh, that had backed up from the, what came down the hill on our side of the track. They was backed up, water backed up it couldn't get out. Now that was level from, from, in otherwords from hill to hill clear across and, uh, things of every description came down that creek. The, uh, had a syc-, uh, grove of sycamore trees in a sort of a island shape down below bout a hundred and fifty yards below where the store was, a little to the side and, and you see the south side in this case was over against the hills, solid rock bout oh thirty feet high in there. Then, uh, but these houses and out from our camp floated down and they hit this bunch of sycamore trees I can see um just exactly as it happened right this instant. They just sort of riding with the waves and then they hit these trees (claps hands) like that and, uh, a loud, very loud noise and the sides came out of the house and for an instant you saw the furniture in place, the next instant there wasn't anything but just rubble / MJG: Um, mmm. / just rolling over the top of each other, uh, everything in it was gone, submerged. That happened, uh, six or eight times from the housing in our place and of course all the stuff from up the creek was coming down. But it was riding the center of the, the current and a good bit of it didn't stack up too much however they did, uh, one thing came out of it, a hobby horse. They'd had a, a fair or some, uh, uh, you know, carnival thing up at, uh, Dakota and, uh, it wash away their merry-go-round and one of the horses landed right on top of this stack of stuff over by the sycamore tree so I had, uh, a good time bout three or four days later getting that horse over into my back yard and dad put it up for a hobby horse and we had a swing for several months then. But, the, uh, the pressure of that water, just stink, uh, you, you just don't realize what would cause all of that terrific odor, it was just horrible. And of course, uh, the people on the, uh, south side of the track had all gone up on the hills and watched

their possessions just float down into the creek and disappear into eternity, not a thing, not even a thing left and, uh, then the, uh, course we were lucky, we didn't have, put all of our stuff out on to the railroad tracks was the only thing we could do and fortunate it, uh, didn't, uh, uh, come under the track, had it gone under the rails, but there wasn't too much pressure on it, the pressure was more over against the hill where the, the current was but, uh, the, uh, animals of, uh, big animals and chickens and just everything floated down that creek you could see, um, uh, for a couple of days. Course now that didn't subside immediately, it began to get low and, uh, course all that water had to come through our way there was no other way out. But, uh, the people weren't after, after they realized what had happened to um they, they, they just cooled down and began to say what are we going to do now. Well it was a day before they could, uh, before we could actually get, uh, uh, over to the otherside, there was mud anywhere from six inches to a foot and a half deep all over the place. The, uh, they, they uh, subsided and were terribly worried and everything like that and what will we do. Well of course neighbors are neighbors and in a, in a place like that they're more than neighbors they're, they're actually part of the whole family, well you'll have a little bit of, uh, stress here and there but the biggest part of the time the people were all very close together and, uh, so shared food and lodging and things like that and, uh, fortunately no, we lost no one in our camp. No, no one died there but there had been, I think there was, uh, maybe eight or ten, maybe more than that up the, the creek further and some of those bodies were never found / MJG: Um, mmm. / . Then of course it went on down to, uh, Quarrier and then the next town below us was Leewood / MJG: Um, mmm. / that was where the forks of the, er, creek is that goes up to Kayford and then over the mountain. And down there was the, uh, railroad roundhouse and shops and things like that, that is where the Shea engines, that was their home. And, uh, bout two or three weeks later we got down to the, to see what had happened, it was absolutely unbelievable because the, the further you went actually the worst it was because after the water

came from, uh, the, uh, Kayford branch and, uh, all up through that area down into there it just washed Leewood entirely off the map, steel bridges, uh, rails were just bent, uh, in any direction and, and almost tied into knots at the roundhouse the, uh, the, the damage was so great that, uh, it just almost, well they had to have the roundhouse to care for their engines and turn um and things like that. But it just cost thousands upon thousands of dollars, you didn't get into the millions in those days but it was just, uh, thousands and thousands. Well of course the, uh, the, uh, (coughs) uh, state, uh, officials, uh, and the red cross and other things began to, uh, get themselves lined up to help um and, uh, fortunately we had a good stock of merchandise in the store which we began to dole out, everybody that came why we gave um just about what he wanted to a certain degree and we wrote it down on paper so that nobody could say that they didn't get it and show what they did get and they would come back for more. Now the, uh, up the, up the creek from us we didn't know too much about what had happened up there for, you know, for a couple of days but, uh, there was just, uh, devastation from all up there and the, the lower end from there on down it was, you might say just completely washed out, just from mountain to mountain. That water was from, uh, hill to hill and when they got down to, uh, Leewood and, uh, it washed the bridge out there went on down into the shops and places like that and there were se, I think there were two_or three people_lost their lives along in there / MJG: Um, mmm. / but, uh, it, uh, one of those things, we were just terrifically fortunate to be on the north side of the track. We didn't have any damage except everything was soaked and we were, didn't open_our mouths about any damage there, / MJG: Um, mmm. / we were just lucky.

MJG: Now how was the community rebuilt, how was Quarrier rebuilt, the houses which were lost / JTW: Well . . . / who paid for that?

JTW: The, uh, the, uh, yes they were rebuilt there were no two ways about that it took several months before they could get, you know, the, there wasn't any railroad

track they had to rebuild the track / MJG: Um, mmm. /
 in order to get, uh, anything up there except pack
 trains / MJG: Um, mmm. /. Now they, we had quite a
 number of pack trains. And they brought food in, uh,
 one of the things, the first time I ever run across
 a, what is that, uh, biscuit that they use in the
 army, the uh, the har-hard tack, / MJG: Hard tack. /
 hard tack first time I run across hard tack and the,
 the uh, they were very generous with it as far as
 it'd go, course it just kept coming and coming and
 when they got to our camp why they fixed everybody
 up and then the next train would go on up the creek
 and things like that.

MJG: Now this was state aid and red cross still doing this?

JTW: Uh, state, red cross and, uh, I think some of the, uh,
 companies kicked in on that too, they uh, they weren't
 too bad, I know that the food and stuff was in our
 store it went out I don't know whether they ever got
 paid for or not, / MJG: Um, mmm. / but dad was very,
 he was a, had charge there wasn't anybody else there
 but he. So he was, uh, very, uh, serious and strict
 about the whole thing and, uh, sometimes, uh, the
 people, you know, they would get a little bit anxious
 or, uh, cross about the fact that they couldn't have
 more but each family, we knew how many people were in
 that town and so consequently everybody ate / MJG: Um, mmm. /
 as long as the, and the, when the pack trains and things
 like that began to come why that helped us out a whole
 lot too. But can food we'd already, uh, uh, used up
 what we had, uh, a small store like that of course you
 don't carry a big stock / MJG: Um, mmm. / and then
 when the, the uh, underpinning went out of the back
 end and about fifty cases of stuff went down the creek
 that, it hurt. But flour and sugar and coffee and a
 few things like that they weren't too scarce, we had
 enough to go around.

MJG: What about drinking water?

JTW: Uh, drinking water we, uh, well the, uh, our drinking
 water we had had a pump, uh, but, uh, my parents
 immediately bought, I mean, uh, filled up everything

that they could get with water coming from the hill
 / MJG: Um, mmm. / . You see, uh, in the, in those
 days, uh, things weren't like they are now, there
 was no pollution in the air to amount to anything
 and if you on, if you're, uh, walking along a creek
 bed or somewhere up the hollers or something like
 that well you just got a drink right there there
 were no contamination / MJG: Um, mmm. / or anything
 like that so we had, we had, uh, uh, plenty of water
 in, in that way because branches, we called um you
 know branches, coming down / MJG: Um, mmm. / all
 along and, uh, we didn't have any difficulty there.
 There were no, uh, uh, I think they came along and,
 uh, uh, I'm pretty sure they vaccinated us for, uh,
 uh, typhoid or something the, / MJG: Um, mmm. /
 they vaccinated nearly everybody for it. But, uh,
 the stink of that place was horrible for months.
 It was the sun just simply couldn't get it all
 dried out. And of course, uh, uh, we kids, we liked
 to go over on that big pile and get, and mess around
 and find out what we could find, / MJG: Um, mmm. /
 there wasn't very much to find, we didn't find any
 bodies, oh you'd find a pig or chicken or something
 like that once in a while but, but part of it what
 there was left of it.

MJG: What was done to prevent that kind of flooding in the
 future, was anything done to, / JTW: Nothing. /
 nothing at all?

JTW: No this, uh, this you see was an act of God there
 was, uh, uh, where a thing that, uh, would happen
 maybe once in a, in fifty, seventy five years and,
 uh, uh, this was the worst flood that had ever
 happened, of course once in a while the, the creek
 would come up to where, uh, it would be dangerous
 but it never would, uh, they had built the houses
 back far enough that they weren't washed away
 under, under normal circumstance but after this
 three or four days rain and the, the uh, actual
 gusher right down on top, cloudburst if you want
 to call it, uh, right on top of it why that was
 just a little too much for anything / MJG: Um, mmm. / .
 But, uh, but, uh, uh, one of those things now (laughs)

I expect maybe that's the reason I'm sitting out here on Pea Ridge instead of down on somewhere near the water. Water and fire are my, uh, uh, I'm afraid of fire, I can get out of the way of water but fire is one thing that I'm / MJG: Um, mmm. / terribly afraid of, I just don't like it.

MJG: Um, mmm. Now how long did you stay in Quarrier after the flood, how long did your family reside there? You moved next to Gallagher.

JTW: I think we were there about a year, I think that they had started running the trains up, uh, you see this closed down mines and everything,

/ MJG: Um, mmm. / everything, fortunately our, uh, we had, uh, pneumatic machinery and, uh, in the mines and, uh, it didn't bother our, our supply at all because we had, uh, uh, a machine there that, uh, you know, to, uh, for compressed air and, uh, we could, uh, could have gone ahead but there wasn't any use getting coal out when they couldn't get it up out of the, uh, on the railroad, there wasn't no railroad. But it was a good year, I'm pretty sure it was a, bout a year maybe year and a half before we left there and, uh, then went over to, uh, Gallagher.

MJG: Um, mmm. Now was your father a store manager in Gallagher as well, did your father managed the store in Gallagher as well?

JTW: Uh, the, uh, I'm not sure whether he went in there as manager or assistant manager but he worked in, was in there for, uh, quite some time after that. The, uh, one other thing about the, uh, experience there at, uh, Quarrier of course I brought out that I had, uh, the run of the whole valley you might say to myself. Uh, up above us at, uh, Wakefor-Wakeforest, (spells) W-A-K-E-F-O-R-E-S-T, Wakeforest there's another coal camp and that one, that was the, uh, uh, post office well, well I had to go up to Wakeforest to get the mail all the time. And I'd ride up on the train and walk back but then when it came to school, there was no school at

Quarrier at all and, uh, then the next school was at Berlin which was at the upper end of Wakeforest. Uh, (spells) G-R-I-M-E-S, Mr. and Mrs. Grimes he, I think he was a owner in that company but he was the, uh, general manager up there, they were fine people and, uh, they had a church there, we went up there to church, uh, walked, it's about a good mile, mile and a quarter from Quarrier up to Wakeforest to the church that was an Episcopal church, / MJG: Um, mmm. / the reason I know that is because they, they uh, I, uh, was sprinkled into / MJG: Um, mmm. / the, uh, member of (laughs) the church / MJG: They sprinkle. / I think Dot was in that too, I think they sprinkled her I'm not sure, but mother was Baptist and dad he was Baptist too so that, uh, it was allright. We went to church and Sunday school up there. And then I had to walk all the way to Berlin to go to school, / MJG: Um, mmm. / there was a four room house up there and it was badly damaged by the flood, I'm not sure that it was wiped out but I know that it was damaged for, for uh, badly for a long time. But, uh, all the kids from around here you walk a mile and a half in those days in snow and so forth you didn't have to worry about anything, you just walked that was all there was to it. Course it was dangerous because the only place you could walk was on the railroad track but, uh, I got along allright. Uh, sis did not attend school up there because she was too young and it was too far for her to go but I did, I had to go up there to school.

MJG: Now could you tell me what the school year was like, uh, when it began, when it ended, uh, was it a shorter year than it is now?

JTW: It, uh, it, no it was just about the same thing as it is now, the, uh, the, uh, started in September and run through till June the next year, / MJG: Um, mmm. / um, mmm.

MJG: There was no time off for planting or for, uh, . .

JTW: Well we'd have, uh, a few days off for Christmas I think, / MJG: Um, mmm. / but national holidays and

stuff like that, if they, uh, they wasn't any, uh, big break for Easter and stuff like that you see, Easter was a Sunday and that was the, next day was school day just the same. But, uh, the teachers were, uh, were, were the old timers and, uh, they were, uh, dedicated and they were very good, / MJG: Um, mmm. / they tried hard there wasn't no two ways about it and they had quite a hard road to go because, uh, those, the children there were, uh, sickly, uh, because of many things, malnutrition and things like that, the improper diets and so forth. They, uh, they, there wasn't as much, uh, actual, uh, know how in those days as there is now. But, uh, there'd be some that would be sick and have colds and things like that, / MJG: Um, mmm. / but some of us were pretty darn strong / MJG: Um, mmm. / it didn't bother us a whole lot to walk in the snow and rain and everything else.

MJG: Did you tend to have the same teachers year after year, / JTW: Yes. / I know in alot of the school / JTW: Yeah. / there were a very great change over, turn over.

JTW: The turn over wasn't too, too fast, / MJG: Um, mmm. / I'd say maybe two or three, five years / MJG: Um, mmm. / something like that and then they would go someplace else, but uh, it, uh, the, uh, course now in this case Mr. and Mrs. Grimes had the influence to get good people in there, / MJG: Um, mmm. / that was one of the things, see they owned, owned the mine, uh, and uh, so consequently they supervised the background there / MJG: Um, mmm. / They were very good too, they were nice people, really nice. But, uh, the, there wasn't a, a hit and miss year after year turn over, / MJG: Um, mmm. / uh, they were paid well and, uh, course it wasn't anything to get excited about, they got about a hundred dollars a month I guess or maybe not quite so much but, uh, that was good and there were starters, some of the older ones would, uh, go from one place to another, uh, every two or three years but, uh, it wasn't a big turn over I don't think.

MJG: Um, mmm. Now who paid the teachers?

JTW: Who paid um?

MJG: Yes.

JTW: Well they were paid by the state, / MJG: By the state. / yeah, but of course now in order to get a little bit better grade why sometimes coal company might kick in a little bit too / MJG: Um, mmm. / But, uh, they, uh, they wasn't any kick particularly about the quality just the, uh, uh, proximity of the school, uh, the, uh, one down at Leewood and but that was two and a half, two and a half miles, we use to walk down there on Sunday afternoons and watch the movies, Pearl White / MJG: Um, mmm. / and things like that, you know.

MJG: Now were these indoor or outdoor movies?

JTW: Oh they were indoor, / MJG: Um, mmm. / yeah. They, uh, they had, uh, you didn't want to miss one because they were serials, you know, and you'd go this week and they'd, uh, the, uh, Perils of Pauline and all of that sort of stuff they were, they were really good, they were no two ways about it. Course they were the best there was in those days.

MJG: Um, mmm. Now around this time your father got his first automobile.

JTW: No, no we didn't get an automobile till we got over to Gallagher, / MJG: To Gallagher? / yeah, um, mmm. Just after the war we got our first automobile, a Ford and, uh, it was the biggest, uh, one of the trouble was that, uh, the front springs on those things were really, really a problem. But I got so I could, uh, put the jack under the darn thing, raise it up, take the spring out, put another one in and back in thirty minutes (break in tape). Course, uh, our car was just an ordinary touring car, we had to put the, uh, side curtains up and everytime it would rain or else you got, would be drenched there's no two ways about that. Then another thing about the, uh, that type

Ford the, uh, uh, you had to crank it, it didn't have a self starter on it and yes sir, you just had to crank and crank until that thing took motion it wanted to go. But in, in the meantime you'd pull your spark down, your spark, it had two levers on, uh, up by the side of the wheel, you pull one, the one on the right hand side was the, uh, gasoline, and the one on the left hand side was the spark. You pull um both down as far as they would go and then run around and get the, get the crank a few twists and if you were lucky they'd start, then you'd run back and, uh, and, uh, adjust the, the, beat yourself to death by just pushing the gasoline back up a little bit and maybe the spark up a little bit then if it took a little bit of know how, didn't take long to get on to it, the only thing it was that, uh, in cold weather you had to, uh, be, had to have a very good strong arm and also after you'd been crossing the creek and got it wet you had to have a good strong arm too (break in tape). (Coughs) the, uh, uh, had a number of problems, uh, one in, uh, the, uh, the spring we always kept two or three extra pieces for the spring but, uh, very rarely we didn't, uh, break the rear spring always the front spring then, uh, they, another thing they had to have was, uh, intertubes, uh, it was quite, uh, the thing to start out, go a couple of miles then you have a flat tire. Well that took, uh, bout, uh, oh bout forty to thirty five to forty minutes to take the tire off, patch it, put it back on, then pump it up. You did the pumping, there wasn't any, uh, stations around any pla-, uh, anyplace that had, uh, a very few that had, uh, pumps, air pumps. But, uh, those things all come and go the, uh, we didn't have, uh, fortunately the, the Fords were pretty tough critters and, uh, you didn't have to worry too much about them. But it was necessary to carry some, uh, parts and, and uh, things along this end in case you were going a little bit out of the way from, uh, away from your base so that you could, uh, do your own work. Spark plugs, always had to take those out and get um the thickness of a dime and stuff like that, but uh, normally, uh, you didn't have too much trouble with the car, you get it, you got so that you could start her real quick and, and

uh, they'd run, they'd make, uh, I don't know how fast it would go. We came down along at the, at the scale track one day and my cousin was with me, my dad didn't know, he knew I was smoking but I never did smoke in front of him I think, but anyhow we were coming down through there going bout twenty mile an hour, I was trying to light a cigarette and my cousin said, "John T, if you don't behave yourself and quit trying to light a cigarette and this machine going twenty mile an hour I'm going to tell your pappy on you. So that, uh, that, that slowed things down, I had to pull over to the side of the road and light my cigarette. But, uh, the, uh, mechanics and things like that, uh, normally the people did, uh, most of us did our own work. We'd take the head off the thing, scrape the carbon out, uh, grind the valves and all that sort of stuff and put um back together. One of the, one trick we had would, we'd, uh, they had a condenser sort of a thing underneath the hood and we'd put a, uh, wire on that and then ground it and, uh, some guy come along and put his elbow on the side of the car and we'd press the button on the inside and he'd get a very nice shock and (laughs) that was alot of fun (break in tape). Uh, people don't do things like that anymore, I suppose you could I never did try it but, uh, we had alot of fun at that. Then, uh, the, the uh, course as I said before you had to have side curtains, the main thing was dust. You'd be going along the road and you'd run up behind somebody that was going about 15 miles an hour and you were trying to go 20 miles an hour and they wasn't an-, any such a thing as trying to get around that bird, you just had to follow him there wasn't any wide places in the road and he certainly wasn't going to be gentleman enough to let you by even though you did honk your horn at him. If you honked your horn at him that made him mad he'd slow down that much slower. So you just had to wait until you, uh, got to where you could. One day we started, one Sunday we were going up to Beckley, so we came up by Montgomery and up to Page up and, uh, up to, uh, well up to Page Mountain what it was. We was going up Page Mountain and, uh, it was brand new road and usty, I don't think I ever did see

anything so dusty in my life. But anyhow, they'd graded that road for about twenty mile and by the time we got to Beckley we were nothing but a solid, just a solid big lump of dust that's all there was to it. But, uh, (laughs) the funny part about it was that you'd slow down and, uh, let the fella go ahead of you so the dust would settle a little bit and here comes some hot shot, boy he just ran around you right quick and (break in tape). Uh, I did the biggest part of the driving, dad drive quite often but he'd let me do the biggest part, uh, of the driving and sometimes I wanted to go up to forty miles an hour, but forty miles an hour was just a little bit out of, uh, that was just a little bit too far out and another thing there was always a cloud of dust behind you, there, unless you were going along the side of the mountain somewhere you couldn't get any, uh, fresh dirt because it was mud. And the, uh, I don't know the automobile, we had fun with it and, uh, one time I had my arm in a sling and drove the, the car now there's a good, good thing to try to do, to work the gas and the spark and your arm in a sling and go over, uh, these roads that we had. There was no such thing as a pavement and until you got to Montgomery and then the streets up there were paved. But, uh, that, that took a little bit of doing and especially the emergency brake was on the left hand side and you had to undo that before you could get going and you had the three pedals and, and you had the, the uh, low gear, the low and medium and high all in one pedal.

MJG: Did many people have cars in the coal camp areas, who would have been liable to've, to've had a car?

JTW: Well the, uh, superintendent usually had a, a car and, uh, sometimes, uh, different people would have um, they were about, uh, I'd say about a half dozen cars in our camp. Some of the store people had um, not all had um and, uh, the, uh, that oval one belonged to, uh, the, uh, man in charge of the stable and I don't remember what the, uh, mine foreman had one, no the mine foreman didn't have one that was, that was, uh, Burke and he didn't have a car, I don't

think he ever had a, a car (break in tape). But, uh, quite frequently we'd have visitors from different places, uh, uh, Hupmobile and, uh, then they'd have, uh, different, uh, types of, uh, uh, let's see Durant, the Durant was in there and, uh, oh and Buick (break in tape). And uh, one that, uh, oh shoot (break in tape). They made, they made wagons too by the same name but I can't think of it / MJG: Um, mmm. / but anyhow they, they were, uh, of course on the river they were more cars all the time. They kept building up and building up and people began to raise Cain about the roads. The more they'd work on the roads the bigger mess they got so finally they started putting in blacktop and, uh, every, the uh, nearest pavement to us was, uh, Kanawha City. That was about, uh, 18 mile from, uh, Paint Creek / MJG: Um, mmm. / down to Kanawha City. The, uh, road on the, uh, on the, uh, north side of the river was, uh, US route 60 and that wasn't paved but it was in, in pretty good condition it had (laughs), had enough, uh, wagon traffic over it that it got a good base in it and then after it got a good base why I don't remember exactly what year it was they began to, to really work on that road but it was years and years that they wasn't anything but just, just uh, regular dirt road was all there was to it. And that's what we had. The, uh, Montgomery, now there was, uh, uh, one, another problem was, uh, crossing the river too. You had, uh, to, to cross the river at that time you had to go to Montgomery, there was a bridge across there and then the next bridge below that was, uh, way down at, uh, Kanawha City that went into Charleston. That was the only, and then the other bridge was at, uh, the C&O depot in Charleston which is still the same one / MJG: Um, mmm. / . But uh, . .

MJG: Were there ferry boats in between the bridges?

JTW: Yes the, uh, there was a ferry boat across at, uh, I don't know what, my uncle ran a ferry across, no he didn't, I don't believe he ever had automobiles, he had a ferry across there at Hansford for quite a while, / MJG: For wagons maybe. / um, mmm. But, uh,

I don't think he had, uh, I can't remember where the, the other place was that, there was a place that you could cross but I don't remember where it was, no I don't.

MJG: Now how about the small creeks in, in the, uh, the Paint Creek, Cabin Creek area if you were driving, say between two or three of the coal camps and you had to cr-, had to ford a small creek, how did you go about doing that, were there bridges or did you simply drive through the creek?

JTW: Yeah, you just, just drive through it, uh, normally the, uh, they had (coughs) the wagons, uh, uh, the company wagons and other wagons, uh, had, uh, there were a whole lot of holes and things they'd take rocks and fill um up and they wasn't too bad to cross the creek but, uh, the, the big gag was always the rain after a heavy rain or two or three days of rain you had mud pa-, just ruts that was the worst part about the whole thing. They crushed, uh, stone and, uh, put that in and that would just go right on down but, uh, the, the, the creek part well they had, uh, sometimes they put, uh, several boulders up above there so that the, the uh, limbs and things like that wouldn't wash / MJG: Um, mmm. / right down into where you were going to cross / MJG: Um, mmm. / . But it was a problem anyway you went about it but, uh, whatever just took off and that was all there was to it. You got back the same day you were lucky, (laughter) it wasn't that bad.

MJG: At about this same time while your family was living in Gallagher this is during the First World War, uh, you went to work under the coal tipple, / JTW: Um, mmm. / now could you describe that for ys please?

JTW: That was, uh, I'd been, uh, uh, cashier in the store and, uh, the men began to get scarce well they, as a matter of fact the, the draft had taken all available men and especially the younger ones there was some sick ones and old ones around but the, all of the younger ones had to go. So they took a good long look at me and they found out that maybe I could, uh,

handle one of their jobs under the tippie. Well I, I didn't mind it at all, we had, uh, a cousin of mine was tippie boss and, uh, consequently he did, uh, I'd been around the thing and been watching um for years anyhow so I knew pretty well what was going on so they put me in charge of the, the uh, screens, they had one lever, uh, real stout sort of a thing that, uh, would, uh, operate the, uh, screens and you had, uh, a boom it, you pull a lever and that would, uh, lower the boom pull another one it'd raise it up out of the coal car and, uh, at that time it was a, a good paying, they had, uh, plenty of, uh, lump coal. Now lump coal means that comes out anywhere from eight to fourteen, sixteen inches square or so. But, uh, then we had, uh, three tracks under our tippie, uh, one that I'd run the, uh, screens the, uh, it would open the, uh, uh, bulk, uh, hopper at the, at the top where the monitors dumped the coal then it would, uh, gravitate down over these screens, uh, the first one of course was for the, uh, the, uh, fine and then fine coal and then the next one there was a track with three, three tracks under there, one for the stack and one for the lump, egg they called it, and then the big lumps. And, uh, when I turn the, uh, all three of um on why then the coal, the screens would shake, uh, in just a forward and back movement and that would cause the, uh, coal to come down the slack would go in it's car and then the lumps and then I'd get the big lumps over in mine. But, uh, the operation of the boom was easy, I didn't mind it too much it was fun and, uh, the, the, I was on a platform about one foot from being level with the top of the fifty foot car that, uh, most of um were fifty feet cars at that time, [MJG: Um, mmm.] fifty ton I mean. Well they was about fifty feet also but, uh, that would, that would, uh, I had this big long rake had three prongs on it, it was long enough to reach across the car and I could reach out on the boom and, and uh, direct the, uh, uh, big chunks into where I wanted um along the edge so that they would, uh, sort of shore up the other. And the, uh, then they wouldn't fall off on the way down to the market. But, uh, it was a, the weather had a great deal to do with things, in

the summertime it was awfully hot and, uh, the screen, uh, shaking of the screens would naturally make alot of dust and, uh, but the, uh, it didn't bother us too much they was a breeze around. Out in it all the time in the wintertime it was pretty cold but, uh, you just put on a little bit more clothes. But the boom, uh, lowing the boom was, uh, it was a, an interesting job and just a little bit different everyday because some, sometimes a car would get loose and you had a little trouble there. When you went up on the hill to get a, a new car, a empty car, uh, most of the time I didn't have to do that all I'd have to do was run the three shakers, er-screens and, and uh, lower and raise the boom and watch the other cars see that they got through allright. But, uh, the, uh, shifter the engines would, uh, push about fifteen cars up the hill, uh, sidetrack back of us. We had two sidetracks up there we could hold 25 cars and, uh, then, uh, when we needed a empty you'd take your coal bar and go up the hill and pinch the, uh, lower, the car the, uh, it had a, sort of a hook thing on it about thirty degree angle and you put that underneath the wheel, bear down on it and that move the car a inch or two at a time, uh, in whatever direction. Well then you go to the other end of the car and, uh, there you, uh, raise a lever the, uh, raise the pin and disconnect the cars then you run back down and get your (laughs) get the crowbar out of the way then jump up on end, tighten the brake up with your hands as much as you could and then put a club in it, uh, to give you more leverage. But, uh, in the meantime that thing started down to the track but you didn't have too much trouble unless there was a defective brake. A defective brake why then you just yell as loud as you could and attract attention the other fellas down below there and they'd, they would, uh, run along the track and take a piece of wood called a chop, we called um chop, and uh, stick that underneath the wheel of the car, slow it down. And then if it, if it didn't, if you couldn't get the thing stopped by the time it got to the one that was on the steel cable at the, uh, underneath the boom why then the, I would raise the boom up so that the, it wouldn't hit the brake on the other end

of the car it came under and then I would let the, uh, let the pressure off of it just about the time this other car would, uh, hit it and, uh, that way it, it slowed it down, then let up on the boom and would stop it. But sometimes they were almost a half a car or maybe a whole car length down below where you wanted it / MJG: Um, mmm. / so then you had to go down and chalk the front car, undo them, pull the pin on that one and push that thing back up a inch at a time. They go about fifty, fifty feet at a inch, a inch and a half at a time takes some, takes a lot of effort / MJG: Um, mmm. / But, uh, then, uh, then you had to go back down then get your other car push him back up in place. It didn't happen very often we only had about, you know, maybe once a month or something like that but most of the time why whoever was going up would take a look at the brakes before they, uh, cut the cars loose. Sometimes you couldn't tell I suppose because the, uh, people who rode those cars down they were there all the time, that was their lifetime job and, uh, they could tell pretty well / MJG: Um, mmm. / how the thing was going to handle. But the . . .

MJG: Now while you were working this job a larger car came into use / JTW: That was the, uh, . . . / one called ninety tons.

JTW: Yeah, just uh, well, uh, first we had the thirties and had the thirties, forties, fifties and seventies. The forty ton usually were sort of a flat bed car and, uh, not very deep and then the fifty ton are, uh, similar to what there are on the road now except there's not very many of um, most of um now are seventies and nineties / MJG: Um, mmm. / And then the seventies came along and then the nineties and just about the time I quit we got the first nineties and, uh, they was beautiful cars there was no two ways about that and long and I put, uh, just kept priming um up and make um look pretty going down the road. I had a hundred and fifteen ton on that car and when it got to Huntington and they weighed, oh boy they just raise plenty of hell now don't think they didn't. But, uh, so I had to (laughs) let it down a little bit (coughs).

MJG: Was it just because you had over loaded the car or was it because the cars were really too heavy for the track even at ninety tons?

JTW: Well now the, uh, that, that track wasn't built really for that much tonage. The, uh, it was, had one car, two cars in a train that would be alright but to run a whole bunch of um through at one time that was something else. The seventies they, they got along pretty good but when the nineties came along it didn't have, it didn't, didn't get very much favor out of us. Now they could run those along the main lines there was plenty of tipples along the main line for the, uh, where the track was really solid and the, and the road bed was good and solid but out track wasn't, that wasn't built for that sort of stuff the size of a rail wasn't, wasn't heavy enough but they got by with the seventies for along time I don't know whether they ever, yeah they did, they put heavy steel up Paint Creek long time that, uh, must have been about, uh, in the, uh, early twenties I guess / MJG: Um, mmm. / they began to put the heavy steel up there. They still get alot of coal from up there / MJG: Um, mmm. / yeah that mine really running. But, uh, the, to come back to the, uh, tipple the, uh, (coughs) the weather had a great deal to do with people, wasn't, uh, you know it was just, uh, uh, different thing, you didn't, uh, get in a rut there was always something doing and that was, that was the beautiful part about that. We didn't, uh, one thing about it we never did have a, a monitor to break loose they were several places along, different we heard about different places that the, uh, steel cable would break / MJG: Um, mmm. / and the monitor was, uh, weighing about, itself weighing about ten, fifteen ton and then had ten or fifteen ton of coal in it would come down the hill (coughs) and tear the tipple all to pieces. But, uh, there were very few, uh, most of the men worked up at the, what they called the head house up the top of the hill where they dump the cars into the bin from the small car that came out of the mines and, uh, then they'd run the, the uh, uh, hoppers up there and get the coal but I'd, as much as it was there was no kick

about the thing if you're going to have to work well then, uh, do your job the, the best you can and that's all there is to it.

MJG: How'd you come to leave your job?

JTW: How's that?

MJG: How did you come to leave the job, why did you leave the job / JTW: Oh. / under the tipple?

JTW: Well the, uh, on account of school was the main thing because, oh, no wait a minute I didn't leave the job I was pulled out of service, they pulled me out of service, they pulled me out of service on account of the child labor law came through and that was when I went to the, uh, to, uh, the, uh, / MJG: ACI? / no I went to Greenbriar that was at, wasn't it?

MJG: No you went, you went first to Allegheny Collegiate Institute.

JTW: Yeah, ACI and then, then to Greenbriar.

MJG: And that was in first of September of 1918.

JTW: Uh, huh, uh, huh. But they, I guess I'd still been there till, if they pulled me off (laughter) still be right in the same place.

MJG: Now ACI was a boarding school, / JTW: Yes. / could you tell us a bit about it?

JTW: The, uh, / MJG: And how you came to go there. / boarding school it was a, a Methodist, uh, school, two ladies ran it, uh, Miss, uh, Johnson and, uh, Miss Collins, uh, Miss Johnson was a native of, uh, Alderson and, uh, I think Miss Johnson, Miss Collins had been her friend in college at someplace else when, uh, Miss Johnson was away at boarding school or college. But, uh, the Johnsons owned practically all the town so everything went along good and, uh, we, uh, would, uh, drill and we were well taken

care of, good food and everything like that and there was a man in charge, he would come up drill us everyday and then we'd go to classes but, uh, actually, uh, it wasn't the, uh, I just got so homesick I didn't know where I was. And the other fellas they well everybody, uh, was, uh, good to each other and everything like that, we all got along, had plenty of fun things / MJG: Um, mmm. / always happening. You just got homesick and that was, uh, just too bad that was all there was to it. I just. . .

MJG: Did you know many of the boys there before you went, I mean were there, were there boys from your home area who were there?

JTW: The, uh, the other boy that went up there at the same time was, uh, uh, / MJG: John Armstrong? / uh, over at Kayford, / MJG: John Armstrong? / John Armstrong / MJG: Um, mmm. / yeah, John Armstrong and, uh, the, uh, he went along but he didn't get homesick. He stayed it out / MJG: Um, mmm. / I don't know how long he was up there, he didn't go to Greenbriar but he stayed at ACI for several years the, uh, ACI kept going, uh, it, uh, I, I imagine it went clear on up through '29 or maybe to, to the '30's but I know that Miss Collins came to Huntington during the depression and started, uh, the, uh, an insurance business here and the, uh, she did real well with it course she had contacts and knew plen-, alot of people here already and, uh, then she lived at the, uh, sixth avenue residential hotel and, uh, that's where she had her apartment and she and my mother were very good friends and she would come over and talk and mother'd have her over to eat maybe two or three times a week or something like that and, uh, that, uh, I miss the boat there because she want, what she wanted me to do was to take her, to drive, she couldn't drive an automobile and she didn't have a auto, never had had an automobile. So she wanted me to drive her over to see her, uh, people you know that she wanted to sell insurance to. And she was going to pay me a dollar a day, or a dollar a trip

or something but anyhow I just, just couldn't get interested in it so the poor thing got there the best way she could. Oh, I'd take her every once and a while I'd take her over on the south side somewhere to see some prospect but, uh, she certainly did sell the insurance and that was during the depression when things were really rough and she wouldn't sell anybody a policy under \$10,000 and, uh, she won quite a few, uh, awards / MJG: Um, mmm. / . But, uh, the school itself was, uh, basically Methodist and, uh, it was on the, the north side of the river and we were on the south side of the river, uh, Greenbriar River and, uh, up on the hill way back from the railroad, bout three blocks back, two blocks back from the railroad and, uh, then on Sunday we marched over to the church and Sunday school then back. Sometimes we have to go, when they had meetings and things like that we have to go two and three times. Well that wasn't so funny especially in the winter, that, uh, the ice, when the ice would break in the Greenbriar in the sum-, in the spring sometimes that stuff was as much as 24 inches thick, 24 inches thick, I've seen it lots of times. And the silly thing about it we'd go out and stand on the bridge and watch the ice go under it, wonder we hadn't turned out but it never did, uh, uh, I think one time they had to dynamite it one time, uh, it, uh, stopped up / MJG: Um, mmm. / and run around the end so they had to dynamite the middle in order to get it to going again. But, uh, that was about the, the only time I ever remember that they had to use anything like that. But the, uh, we had to drill, kids there had to drill and things like that, there was a man came over and he would give us our drilling but, uh, and the school was allright, the teachers was allright but it, it just wasn't, uh, wasn't my cake I'd get homesick.

MJG: Now why were you sent there in the first place, why were you sent there?

JTW: The reason, uh, that I was sent up there was simply for the reason that there wasn't any schools anywhere

around down in our area to go to. Either, uh, either, uh, they had, uh, at Pratt they had, uh, just a regular school, I think it was, uh, three or four rooms there (coughs) and, uh, the next, the next step in education was up at Montgomery and the other one was down at, uh, that would be high school you see at, uh, East Bank / MJG: Um, mmm. / . Now East Bank still is a, uh, center for the, uh, high school of the creek area, they bus um in there, bring um in in bus loads. But, uh, the, uh, didn't do, well it would have been just an impossibility for me to go to school down there there was no two ways about it. Now sis stayed with our relatives in Pratt and went to school there for about, uh, I think a couple of years or so and then, uh, she went to, uh, one of my cousins was the, uh, uh, principal at, uh, just at the lower end of Montgomery, they had about a six or eight room building there and she was the principal of that and it was called (spells) L-O-V-E, Love Block, (spells) B-L-O-C-K, Love Block was the name of the school and, uh, Mary, that was my cousin, Mary Trimble was the, uh, principal for oh eight, six or eight years, maybe longer than that. And Dot went up there to school part of the time and then, uh, of course at, uh, Pratt also, uh, there. The, uh, the good thing about it was that they always had dedicated teachers the, the, uh, most of um just stayed right in those same places year after year, / MJG: Um, mmm. / all of the, all of the Trimble girls was, uh, three, three of um were teachers / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, they stayed right on till, till pension in the last few years / MJG: Um, mmm. / right on through.

MJG: Now your classmates at ACI and at Greenbriar later, uh, what kinds of backgrounds did they come from?

JTW: Well most of um were, uh, just about like myself they were from, uh, uh, families that were interested in getting their kids educated but there wasn't anything else to do only send um someplace else.

MJG: They were not wealthy families, they were not

wealthy families by and large.

JTW: Oh no, no they, uh, uh, were bank foreman and train, I mean, uh, yes of the train people sent people out and, uh, well just who ever wanted, uh, could afford it could possibly get um through, they did that. They, uh, we had to, they saw we had, uh, uh, from, uh, Beckley, Malhoe, uh, uh, down at, uh, Montgomery, and Thurmon, and uh, many places along, let's see there's some of the others up on top the hill, uh, Flat Top and Cotton Hill and those places, / MJG: Um, mmm. / uh, see just maybe a couple here and there. Now over at the Greenbriar we had um from, uh, all over the state of West Virginia and, and uh, several from over in Virginia and, uh, it was the same thing up there the (spells) R-A-I-N-E-S, Raines, uh, they had, uh, two or three boys in there big as, in Greenbriar and, uh, then had, uh, from Huntington we had, uh, Lewis Beterman and, uh, uh, Perry, and Cowden, W.K. Cowden, Freeman, Aubrey Freeman, he was killed in a, a automobile accident, uh, during the summer. One time he came over summer and, uh, that was about 19 and 20, must have been bout 1922, 23, but anyhow he, uh, ran off Piedmont Road down near Truman's house in an automobile, / MJG: Um, mmm. / uh, then the, it was just the same thing all around with, uh, they weren't any particular rich people there / MJG: Um, mmm. / I don't think but, uh, well Freeman would have been bout as, uh, rich as anybody would be / MJG: Um, mmm. / as far as that was concerned but, uh, . . .

MJG: Now what kinds of things did you do at Greenbriar, what kinds of activities were you involved in?

JTW: Well the, uh, most everybody took part in a little bit of something along the line. I liked, uh, I never could, uh, uh, was always pretty fat and I didn't do any good at, uh, basketball except maybe a couple of us go down to the gym (break in tape). And, uh, basketball, I've always enjoyed watching people play basketball and, uh, my wife use to play when she was in high school but I never did

get to play basketball main thing that I had was, uh, the track, I liked to run and, uh, believe you me it's been beneficial, uh, I've seen so many people overweight and things like that that just simply will not take exercise but there at Greenbriar there was three years or two year, yeah two years and a half or three years that, uh, I was on the, ran with the track team. I wasn't considered a member of the team although I did, uh, run one mile in a, in a race and came in last (laughs) but I think I surprised everybody to think I would even get there last. But I did and, uh, we use to go out early in the morning and run anywhere from a half to three miles and back

∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ and, uh, six miles ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠

out and back, uh, but, uh, it, it gave you muscle tone and everything of a kind I liked it very much. And then in the, uh, when I wasn't in that, uh, when the track team wasn't running then I'd be the guide for the whole three companies on exercises

∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ very good and, uh, fortunately the stride that I have is exact military cadence

∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ just exactly and, uh, so I got to be the guide for the quote, for my company not only my company but for the whole battalion when they were all in parade ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠. That was really good, I liked that and there's, there's the attitude you have toward anything usually helps out to make it more, uh, you know satisfactory for everybody concerned and I liked it very much. Then the, uh, football I always liked to be a little bit tough with the rest of the gang and I would either play center or right or left guard. And, uh, we had, uh, our team went over to, uh, uh, someplace and played a game over there and, uh, we won. But, uh, I was always in the, in the scrub team practicing against the first team, ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ we had pretty good teams too. The, uh, when we'd go on a trip, we'd go over to Clifton Forge ∠ MJG: Um, mmm. ∠ go down to Ronsford catch a train and go over to Clifton Forge, I was in the band at that time.

MJG: Now how did you come to get into the band, had you played a instrument before you went to Greenbriar?

JTW: Yeah, I went to, no, uh, I'd always wanted to play, uh, you know in the band in something and, uh, they didn't have any, uh, uh, uh, clarinet. They didn't have anyone in the clarinet so dad bought me a clarinet and I practiced on it till I ran everybody crazy then I'd go out, out maybe a (laughs) way up at the other end of the baseball field and practice it out there on the bleachers and practice on that thing. Got to be pretty good at it too. We had several, uh, uh, you know, shows and things like that and they'd always take us from one place to another whenever anything was a going on but in a, I played that and when I got tired of that so then I went to the, uh, snare drum, I liked that for a while, and then I took the base drum then went back to the snare drum and then quit (laughs). I had enough of it and decided to quit. But it is, uh, it's good to be in those things, now as far as the other things are concerned the rest of us we liked to run and on Sunday afternoon we'd run, uh, we had until six o'clock and immediately after lunch we'd take off, we got back from church have our lunch and then we had till six o'clock we're perfectly free to go anywhere we wanted. And we, bout four or five of us would take out for Whitcomb, (spells) W-H-I-T-C-O-M-B, that's where the, the C&O, uh, divides the Greenbriar division comes in at Whitcomb / MJG: Um, mmm. / on to the main line of the C&O and where the, the C&O main line cross the bridge, cross the, cross Greenbriar River about, uh, oh a half, no not a half a mile, bout just a few hundred yards down the road was a nice swimming pool. And we'd go down there swim back and forth across that, uh, river and one day, uh, that was the last year I was up there one fella didn't make it. Fella by the name of Patterson, and uh, he, uh, you know, we all just swam, we didn't have any clothes on, wasn't any use to have any clothes on / MJG: Um, mmm. / they, they didn't heed progress (laughter). We swam right across the river and back and, uh, Pat went over, somebody else went over with him and they came back and he was sitting on a rock over there, he dove in and never did come up. I don't think he hit his head on a rock because, uh, uh, the fireman and other people, uh, you know,

they decided that there wasn't anything there for him to hit his head on but they searched for that boy for three days before they finally found him and he was down the river bout three hundred yards up underneath a, a, where just something just thrown him up underneath a little ledge, / MJG: Um, mmm. / and uh, as soon as it happened why we decided well we've got to do something right now so I took off for the, uh, school and I told the others, I said now go up there and tell that man at the tower to call the school and tell um. And by Scott they went up there and that guy gave um an argument and wouldn't, uh, wouldn't call and, uh, it was, oh I don't know how long it was before they did finally convince him that they weren't kidding and he called the school but, uh, but I was already up there and, uh, told um what had happened and of course they got, uh, everybody round and emergency and everything and down there they went. But, uh, they called over to, uh, Caldwell and those places and got people out looking and / MJG: Um, mmm. / was too bad, nice kid, but uh, just one of those things. But that was the only time I was in a party that anybody drowned, / MJG: Um, mmm. / uh, but we would go down there every year and, uh, and another thing over to, uh, on Monday when we had money (laughs) if you didn't spend all of your allowance you could go over to the Greenbriar. Five or six of us would rent a taxi and go over to the Greenbriar and we could go into the swimming pool over there for twenty five cents, / MJG: Hum. / at, uh, White Sulphur / MJG: Um, mmm. / and that was good, but if you didn't want to go there why then you'd go uptown and play a one arm bandit slot machine (laughs) and suddenly your quarter was gone one way or the other / MJG: Um, mmm. /.

MJG: Now what about the tonic, what about the tonic, the Ed Pinaud's tonic, the tonic that you all would buy?

JTW: Oh yeah, the uh, that was in, uh, connection with the, uh, uh, we always did, uh, have things to do but one of the things I don't do yet today is to criticize young people too much for the simple

reason that I happen to been through that stage and when, uh, at Greenbriar there was a stage of, uh, nearly everybody up there had long hair and, uh, it would, uh, the hair on the front of your head would come clear down underneath your chin but we had so much grease on it when it was combed back and we wasn't allowed to have it that long actually. Just suppose to have it just so but, uh, we'd put, uh, grease on it and smooth it down till there wouldn't be one hair out of place anyway they looked at ya. But the, uh, we got the, the idea of, uh, uh, drinking, uh, Ed Pinaud's either hair tonic or shaving lotion whichever was available and (laughs) we'd chip our money in and go down on Saturday, Friday or Saturday we'd go downtown and get the bottle of Ed Pinaud have it ready for Sunday and then, uh, Sunday night before we went to church we'd take a good stiff drink and by the time we got over to the old stone church you'd think it was mid summer, (laughs) lilacs all over the place. Those things, uh, they didn't, uh, they didn't exactly like it but they didn't do any, try to do anything to us for it and so naturally if they'd tried to put the clamp on us we'd of kept it up but since they didn't why we didn't waste our money very often (laughter). That, there wasn't very much foolishness going on though, we had, uh, we'd go to church and Sunday school to your own, whichever one you wanted to go to in the, uh, bad weather we'd go to the Baptist, that was up at the top of the hill, uh, Lewisburg is on a hill and the main street in the wintertime is very, very slick and to march down that darn thing and then march back up it and keep your contact all the time I mean lines and everything else it was pretty rough. So in order to avoid that we'd go to the Baptist church in the morning to Sunday school and church and, then in the evening we had to go to the Presbyterian whether we wanted to or not. But, uh, it was funny though, lots of times when they was really slick in the wintertime somebody would fall and knock four or five more down, that wasn't very good because that was hard on to your uniform, / MJG: Um, mmm. / had um dirty. And that wasn't, that wasn't acceptable from any, uh, stand.

Greenbriar was a good school there were no two ways about it. Some of um didn't like it, I liked it and, uh, always got along, course I would, uh, I would always do the wrong thing and get demerits and have to walk the beat but, uh, that was all in the game.

MJG: What made it different from ACI, why did you like it so much more than ACI?

JTW: I think it was because of the man in charge. We had, uh, uh, uh, two or three of the, uh, uh, this fella, uh, worked, lived with us, rather his, my roommate was Charles Bradford Coleman, uh, C.B. Coleman, his hometown is Pratt, (spells) P-R-A-T-T, West Virginia and his father was in charge of the, uh, uh, land holdings of the Charles Pratt Company of, uh, I believe it was Charles Pratt Company of, uh, New York. They owned, uh, quite a bit of land in that and Mr. Coleman was in charge overseer. Uh, Chuck and I we lived at nearly one end of the hall and then they were two officers of the, uh, uh, that lived the second door on ahead of us and, uh, then we had friends from, uh, Ken Cavalier lived right across the hall and, uh, uh, now wait a minute. There's four or five of those fellas right in there that, uh, were, uh, all from Huntington and then the Raines Brothers from up at Rainelle and everybody got along just swell there was no, no, uh, uh, foolishness going on or anything at all. But these officers up at the end of the hall they were always congenial / MJG: Um, mmm. / very fine people, uh, the uh, one of um had, he was one of the joke tellers. He would tell a joke about anything from, from this to that and back again. He kept, he could do it. Well anyhow we'd slip out of the room, suppose to be to bed ten o'clock, nine thirty, ten o'clock and we could slip out of our room down to his, uh, room and sit around and listen to um talk, / MJG: Um, mmm. / well that was alot of fun. But, uh, the, the real management of the place was Colonel H.B. Moore, and uh, then was, uh, the other one was Captain Joe Moore, (spells) M-O-O-R-E, and uh, then, uh, the one that I liked very well was D.T. Moore and he was the, uh, uh, teacher of, he was a bible

teacher and the colonel was a mathematician and he knew so much algebra that it ran out of his ears and he scared the devil out of most of us and we nev-, well actually the, uh, about five of us that never did get through his class in algebra. And I had to go, when I came to Huntington, I had to go down to Cammack School and get my algebra in order to get a diploma in solid geometry (laughter) but he would scare us to death they would, what'd you, oh man but he was, he was, uh, he was good, he was hard, uh, as far as the school was concerned he was, uh, he wanted everything done right, he was hard but he was square. Now all my life I've always admired people, it don't matter about how hard they are about rules and things like that if they're square / MJG: Um, mmm. / but when it comes to deviating a little bit this way and the other way show, uh, partiality I don't go for that stuff. But, uh, those, uh, those three people or four or five of um there were, uh, a great influence on all of us (telephone rings) there were no two ways about it, / MJG: Um, mmm. / but uh, the, uh, . .

MJG: What courses did (telephone rings) you take, what other courses did you take, algebra and the bible.

JTW: Everything, just, uh, right down the line English and history and just everything / MJG: Um, mmm. / I made pretty good grades up there of course, uh, considering the fact that I hadn't had any, uh, real training in school back in the, the creek and places like that, that made against me for the first year some, / MJG: Um, mmm. / but when I got straightened out why that was allright. And, uh, even when I came down here and my grades were okay at Marshall, I mean at, uh, Huntington High and then when I finally got into Marshall why I was working twelve midnight at, uh, eight in the morning going to school and they kind of dragged down for a little bit there but I made some fairly decent grades, / MJG: Um, mmm. / nothing to be excited about but I tell you one thing when I see people these days that have everything under the sun at their fingertips and then don't make the grades or don't do right in school it makes

me very angry because I had to sacrifice to beat the devil to get what little bit of grades I did get / MJG: Um, mmm. / . I take up for that there's no two ways about that. We worked seven days a week, seven, seven nights a week and, uh, go to school five of the seven why that, that's pretty rough / MJG: Um, mmm. / (coughs).

MJG: Now the school year at Greenbriar was ia a, a normal school year, did you stay there through the summers or did you . . .

JTW: No, no, uh, it, uh, we started usually in the, in September the, uh, sometimes I don't believe that they started in August they usually ran September through June, / MJG: Um, mmm. / June the 30th I think was, uh, seems like June the 30th. But anyhow it was in June when the semester, when the, uh, whole thing was / MJG: Um, mmm. / over, yes sir. Yeah that's . . .

MJG: Now how long were you there at Greenbriar?

JTW: Uh, uh, I think it was, er just about four years all / MJG: Um, mmm. / together, um, mmm / MJG: Until 1923. / . I would have, uh, I would have graduated the next year but ran out of money, / MJG: Um, mmm. / and uh, then we had moved to Huntington and these schools down here had a good reputation so I just finished that / MJG: Um, mmm. / . I think Charles went back, that was my roommate, we roomed together all the time, I think he went back and graduated and came out, uh, as captain / MJG: Um, mmm. / in the ROTC. And I was promoted to first lieutenant so I would have been eligible for captain the next year maybe, / MJG: Um, mmm. / you never can tell (loud clap).

MJG: So you moved to Huntington then, your family moved to Huntington and you finished your schooling at Huntington High School?

JTW: Um, mmm. But we came, uh, here in June, uh, and, and moved into 1720 6th avenue, that was 1923 and, uh, I

think we were there about three years, the house belonged to, uh, uh, Dr. Wilkinson, uh, who is, uh, the C&O, top surgeon for the C&O and, uh, he offered us the house and, uh, dad and mother decided they wouldn't buy it and so we moved then over to, uh, 621 16th street and, uh, we lived there, they lived there, uh, clear up until both of um died. And, uh, it was, uh, a nice little, it was a little house but it was a mighty / MJG: Um, mmm. / nice home there. The house don't always make the home.

MJG: Now can you tell me what your impressions of Huntington were when you first moved here, now you lived mainly in small coal camps or small towns, Lewisburg probably had been the largest town you'd lived in up to that time, how did Huntington compare with, uh, with your / JTW: (Coughs). / other experiences, how was it different?

JTW: Well it took quite a bit of getting use to it, I can tell you that because with the background that I shown up in the, uh, coal fields and up the creek were you might say shut out completely from the rest of the world but at Greenbriar we weren't too much in touch with the rest of the world by a long shot because we, we had rules and we only had, uh, certain periods of time that we could go even downtown. The rest of the time we were on bounds and it meant you stayed on bounds you didn't go anyplace else without permission, you could get permission to go out and, and uh, stay at the home of somebody or something like that over the weekend and we did every once and a while. Somebody would ask us to come out and stay for the, uh, weekend well then, uh, Lewisburg of course has, uh, was one of the oldest towns in the eastern section of the state and it was, uh, uh, populated by old families and they were very generous with us they would have us out to their house for, uh, dance or maybe they'd, uh, one or two of um would, uh, take us over for, a whole bunch of us for, to have a big party and dance clear up until ten or eleven o'clock at night, that was quite a blow out. But, uh, one particular, uh, uh, family that lived the, the second house when you turned the corner

there at the old stone church at the left and the seminary was on the right and they lived in the second house back of the seminary, it was a gorgeous thing had, uh, wonderful floors and beautiful woodwork and everything like that it, uh, I think they were coal people, / MJG: Um, mmm. / coal operators or timber one or the other. But anyhow they would invite, uh, many as, uh, ten of us or twelve and ten girls from the seminary and we'd go over to their house and dance and just have a big time ain't no two ways about it. And then the, uh, family right next, lived right next to the old stone church my mother and father stayed there when they came up for, uh, commencement one year, / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, they stayed there and they had a little girl and, uh, we were, uh, pretty good friends / MJG: Um, mmm. / (laughs). That was a good one, uh, they, uh, uh, the family had a car and they knew I could drive a car so they allowed us to take the car and go for a ride so this particular Sunday it was in, oh, bout November I guess, it was chilly I had on, I had on one of those overcoats, you know, with the, the flap up around and everything. I had a overcoat, we got in the car and we started out the road toward Ruthford well we got out there, out, oh I guess we must have gone a way, seem like a whole lot, bout five miles maybe and we decided to turn around and come back. And that car got itself in a mud hole and I couldn't get that thing out of there to save my neck and you know what I did? Sir Walter Raleigh wasn't the only guy, I took my overcoat off and put under the wheel of that car to get that out of that mud hole / MJG: Um, mmm. /.

MJG: Well Queen Elizabeth wasn't a car, / JTW: Hum? / Queen Elizabeth wasn't a car though.

JTW: Yeah, and boy it was a sight so we took it back to her home and, uh, gave it a good dunking and got most of the mud off of it but, uh, we had to send it out the next day but (laughs) boy oh boy that was something, that was, that was really a, a incident. But things were always pretty good up there the, the uh, coming back to the town one family up there

had, uh, a back, uh, Lewisburg was full of holes because it's in that limestone area where, uh, the water has, uh, for centuries run down into the smallest place and, and consequently there's a hole. Well, uh, these holes in the wintertime they make just, uh, the perfect thing to ski on and ski down this side and half way up the other side and then there other places have ponds and we'd take skates and go out there skate on the stuff and, uh, (coughs) uh, the towns people were always good to us and, uh, they never did get too close but they, they looked after us, there wasn't anything going on, trouble or anything like that / MJG: Um, mmm. / at all, and uh, even the roughest boys that we ever had they was from pretty decent families but they tried to be rough / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, every once in a while one of um would do something and they just take him over to the police headquarters and get him a good talking to and send him back and, uh, tell the colonel about it and (laughs) he didn't do it anymore.

MJG: Well how did that compare to Huntington, how was Lewisburg, / JTW: Well now . . . / again a young man coming into, uh, a new / JTW: Yeah. / city and a new situation, uh, what was Huntington like for you?

JTW: It'd be, be I tell you the, when I hit here I think I was bout the greenest thing that ever hit here in, in anyplace there were no two ways about it because the fact that, uh, we had all lived together at Greenbriar didn't make us all the same, uh, category when I got to civilization and there was quite a bit of, uh, uh, distance between both sides of the track. In otherwords I lived on the wrong side of the track, these other boys were all from, uh, lawyers and doctors and, and business people and Beteman his, uh, Douglas Dodge she owned dodge and, uh, the Freemans of course they were established and, uh, then, uh, the, uh, I can't think of all their names but, uh, about, uh, ten or twelve other fellas here in Huntington. Well finally I realized what the, uh, difference in things were and, uh, we all just became separated I

never did, uh, never did bother um, uh, when we'd meet downtown we'd, uh, sit down have a coke and big bull session and stuff like that and we always got along, I never had any enemies or anything of that kind in any, any of the fellas up Greenbriar or anyplace else as far as that concern. But, uh, there was such a difference in the, uh, uh, social structure that, uh, I never did, uh, never did bother um at all and we got along just swell, uh, I just divorceed the whole thing. Now as far as the rest of us concerned why we, the family we always pretty well attended to our business and didn't get into this side or the other. We went to the Presbyterian church when we came here and, uh, didn't miss too much except when working at night / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, uh, that was the, when I first came here we weren't, I wasn't working at night and sometimes I'd go to, uh, church and Sunday school on Sunday / MJG: Um, mmm. / and sometimes I didn't. And then finally when I was working at night why, uh, seven days, uh, uh, just got a little bit too much so I drifted away and drifted away, uh, just, uh, got entirely out of the habit of going to church / MJG: Um, mmm. / . Not that I had anything against it I like to go to church there's no two ways about that (break in tape).

MJG: Now what about, how would you compare Huntington High as a school having now come from Greenbriar and from a, a military boys' school into Huntington High / JTW: Well of course . . . / School, what was it like, how was / JTW: The, uh, . . . / that adjustment?

JTW: The difference was, uh, the fact that the, uh, we were all boys up there and this was coed down here and, uh, the teachers we'd always had men teachers and we had women teachers and men teachers here both. And it was, uh, wasn't exactly confusing but it was interesting to, to watch the other people how they reacted to their teachers. Now with us the, the, the teacher was the law and, uh, we knew it better than to cross um up and we didn't. But, uh, down here why somebody was always, uh, causing trouble

and, uh, confusion and stuff like that in classes and, uh, not always, you know, but occasionally they would do that and I just simply wasn't use to it, I always had plenty of, uh, respect for my teachers and, uh, clear on through there was no question about it. But, uh, these kids they didn't act that way, they acted like they were doing somebody a big favor to go to school. Instead of vice versa they, that they, well anyhow the, uh, now as far as the town was concerned, uh, I had you might say lived, uh, uh, oh almost in a monastery or, uh, uh, protected life because when I came home in the summertime why the, I either got a job or, uh, or something up in the creek or worked in the store or whatever was vacant and, uh, was always busy. But when he got to Huntington now that was a different thing, it was, uh, so many more people and things of that kind and, uh, dad said one time, I always remembered he said, uh, now things are not the same here in Huntington as they were on the creek. And I don't, I'm not telling you not to do anything but just be a little bit, uh, careful so that you won't cause me too much trouble. Well I didn't realize what the man was saying until I happened to see some of the things people can get into and then that was, uh, pretty rough. But I didn't get into any of um / MJG: Um, mmm. / thank heaven for that. Now the, uh, that, uh, that experience that basic experiments as to me now I like the military angle I didn't mind them telling me what to do or anything else because I usually did what I wanted to anyhow but I paid my, paid the price by demerits when I did / MJG: (Laughs). / but down here it was the law and order and Huntington at that time was wide open. It was a rip roaring town there was no two ways about it. Everything went, there was just everything going on and you didn't have to walk very many feet in any one direction and get into anything that you wanted to get into.

MJG: Now can you give me some specifics, do you mean speakeasies and that sort of things or what kinds of things?

JTW: Well, uh, the whole business, gambling and, uh, uh, all of the things in that category, prostitution and all of the things in that category and, uh, course now we didn't, uh, I was only four (break in tape).

MJG: This part of the interview is being conducted on the seventh of June, 1976. Now Mr. Walton, in our last session you'd begun to talk about what Huntington was like when you first moved here, would you like to continue with that please?

JTW: Uh, Huntington was, uh, naturally the, uh, only experience we (coughs) had with a large town, uh, we had, uh, relatives in Montgomery, West Virginia and we were down into Charleston, uh, visiting friends and relatives there occasionally but to live in a town is entirely different than just, uh, being in it. Now the, uh, one of the things that, uh, (coughs) was outstanding was that the people, uh, were friendly, of course we knew several people here and, uh, uh, had, uh, relatives here also my Uncle Jerry lived here and, uh, later, uh, another member of the family my dad's Aunt Lula also moved to Huntington and, uh, so consequently we got along very well. Uh, we kids, uh, I don't think I've ever seen a stranger so we, uh, made friends with the, uh, both sis and I with the, uh, youngsters up and down the avenue there who were going to high school and also going to the Presbyterian church, we attended the Presbyterian church for quite a while and, uh, that, uh, we had an automobile and some of those didn't. And, uh, then when it, uh, during the summer why we'd go on picnics down to, uh, Camden Park and out into the country. And also along the river, near the locks and dams and things like that but, uh, it was a, quite an experience the, uh, the boys of course they, they were different than the girls and sis got along pretty well with the girls well I didn't have any arguments with the boys and, uh, so consequently everything went along very well with us / MJG: Um, mmm. / . We, uh, mother, uh, uh, had friends here too and, uh, the, uh, Cooper family lived just, uh, on the other

end of the block from, or another block down the street from us and, uh, they were our old time friends. But, uh, the, uh, the experiences were, uh, somewhat, uh, your, your outlook was different had, uh, more people and more congestion and more, we lived right there on sixth avenue and there were quite a bit of, uh, traffic even at that time well of course and, uh, when we came here in '23 why that was suppose to be way up in the century, you know, and, uh, automobiles were prevelent and very seldom did you see a horse and buggy. But, uh, the, uh, the people they weren't, uh, uh, hostile, they were nice and, uh, got along nicely with everything and everybody and, uh, we enrolled in high school and, uh, at Greenbriar I had, uh, not gotten credit for my algebra, I had to have the algebra and so I had to go clear down to Cammack High and get my, uh, algebra down there. Well I finished up allright, Miss May Newman was my teacher and she was very fine, took, uh, there was another fella from someplace else and he and I both had to go down there to get the algebra so we walked, uh, together up from, uh, there / MJG: Um, mmm. / from the high school for the rest of our classes during that day. Then, uh, later, uh, after the first year, let's see we didn't, uh, September, later that fall I got a job in the, uh, A&P store at 8th street and 8th avenue and worked there in the afternoons after school and on Saturday. Then, uh, uh, that way I missed all the football games and things like that but sometimes you need a little bit of extra money. So, and it was very little I tell you that too, coming from the A&P company, boy that was rough. Well anyhow we, uh, we had an automobile and, uh, we hauled the kids to school that lived along with us there bout five of us altogether, five or six and, uh, we'd park over by the high school it wasn't, uh, it wasn't any particular, uh, uh, rough stuff going on at that time, there was a little hazing from some of the, uh, different sections but not very much / MJG: Um, mmm. / . The, uh, uh, in the, uh, never did have any real big fights there were one or two fellas that when they decided to fight they'd get right out in the middle

of 9th avenue and 8th street and stop traffic and just have themselves a nice big fist fight. Now that was, uh, one of um was my wife's brother, Mark Page and, uh, uh, never heard who the other boy was but he was a football player too and they'd get out there and they'd just have themselves a darn good fist fight, blood all over the place and then they were friends again, back the way they were. But, uh, it, this was during the flapper age and the, down near the, uh, uh, the ho-, uh, uh, there was a place downtown called The Fountain and that was the, uh, hangout for all of the flappers and the, uh, gigolos and, uh, candy ankles.

MJG: Now what is a candy ankle?

JTW: Well a candy ankle, well they were, those were people that, uh, they were just too good to work, they didn't work and they, uh, lived, they weren't rich either they were just, uh, putting up a big pretense of being something that they weren't / MJG: Um, mmm. / Well one fella I have in mind, I won't mention his name but one fella he went clear through life on that same phase, he uh, he graduated from, uh, Huntington High and, uh, married some poor girl and boy she just had to work her arms through and kept, uh, the whole family, his family helped um and her family helped um, they raised a couple of kids but, uh, actually that man I don't think he ever had a job more than six months in any one location / MJG: Um, mmm. / And a little bit of alcohol in there too but, uh, / MJG: Just speaking . . . / he, he was a by-product of the candy ankle age.

MJG: Um, mmm. Now speaking of, uh, of alcohol, this was an era of prohibition, / JTW: Yes. / uh, in the United States, / JTW: Yeah. / what was Huntington like with prohibition?

JTW: Well as far as I knew there was very little of it because, uh, we didn't have any, uh, contact, my dad never did drink and I never did drink, I can't even to this day I can't stand the taste of the

stuff / MJG: Um, mmm. / even the, uh, the better brands, uh, such as, uh, well the most expensive you have whatever it doesn't matter to me I just don't like the taste of whiskey / MJG: Um, mmm. / . I don't like beer and I wouldn't give you a dime a dozen for either one of um (laughs).

MJG: Now what about gambling in Huntington?

JTW: Uh, gambling, uh, let's, uh, on this alcohol business now when, uh, we would go to dances at, uh, the Prichard Hotel opened, uh, about the second or third year we were here and, uh, uh, we all went to, use to have big dances there from high school and everything else and different clubs around town and we would go to some of those dances. And, uh, there was, uh, a little speakeasy joint in the, uh, bootlegger joint in the alley just back of where the, uh, the, it was the, uh, six and a half alley to the east / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, there was a bootleg place in there, I think it was called "Molley's," I'm not certain and, uh, I think it was "Molley." But anyhow all you had to do was just go up there and peck on the door and, uh, say a pint and out through the hole came a pint and you put your money through first / MJG: Um, mmm. / though and out came a pint. Well us kids would kick in, there was usually bout, uh, four dollars a pint and, uh, anywhere, yeah that was good whiskey, that was good corn whiskey and we got four dollars a pint and, uh, we'd, uh, we got pretty tight on a pint. You take a couple of drinks you know and make you smell like you'd really been drinking and then you could show off to suit yourself (laughter) so it was good that's the way it was done of course always there's somebody gonna overdo it and they'd get drunk and, and have to be evicted and stuff like that.

MJG: Now were the police aware of "Molley's?"

JTW: Oh yeah, poor old Molley get arrested every couple of three weeks or so take her down, uh, I think she was written up in the Herald Dispatch here bout,

uh, month ago, uh, and, uh, they'd take her down and fine her, turn her loose, they knew what was going on and so they just fine her every once in a while but there were plenty of others around in town I've heard / MJG: Um, mmm. / . I didn't, uh, course hadn't a thirst for that stuff why I didn't pursue it and didn't have the money in the first place and thank heaven I didn't have any taste for it in the second place well then, uh, the, uh, there were quite a bit of it. It was in the paper all the time the, uh, course Catlettsburg at that time was the, the, uh, uh, hub of, uh, supply / MJG: Um, mmm. / every, they would go to Catlettsburg in any way you could and usually they would catch um across the bridge, across the Big Sandy Bridge coming this way. But they'd bring it up in boats and everything else they said so I don't know too much about it. But the trains they'd go down and load themselves on the train maybe they'd get off here and if their suitcase looked a little bit heavy why they would, uh, take it over and search it / MJG: Um, mmm. / and catch um that way but they, they always had plenty of whiskey around they said. So, but uh, that was really, uh, something course there was always fights and things the, uh, uh, we went to a all night dance the Fourth of July down at Camden Park and, uh, I knew a fella that was, uh, accused of, uh, of being drunk that night and dern if I didn't have to miss two days of school to go over to Wayne to testify for him and it didn't do any good they slapped him in jail anyhow (laughter). But, uh, / MJG: Now . . . / that, that was about the end of it as far as the gambling and things like that were concerned the, uh, they were spots all over the place the, the Florentine Hotel at the corner of 9th street and, and 4th avenue and, uh, there was a man ran a, a cigar place there, uh, cigars, cigarettes, and so forth and also took tips, his name was, we called him, uh, he had, uh, poor fella had one eye, uh, "one eyed Al" Stickenger, Al Stickenger, he died about, uh, three years ago, uh, but he ran the book there and then out on 9th street between 6th and 7th, uh, there was, those

stores stood empty out there for quite a while and, uh, there was a fella by the name of Johnson that ran book out there for one of the bigger book makers here in town. Downtown, uh, on 4th avenue about opposite where Reuschlein's is now located on 4th avenue was, uh, uh, can't think of that man's name but, uh, we use to go up there and, and, uh, play blackjack and, uh, you could bet on the horses or you can shoot crab or just everything you wanted to over this restaurant down there and he owned a restaurant downstairs and then you went up the side to go up to the place. Well it was raided quite frequently and, uh, they kept the, uh, kept the thing pretty real wide open though. Those were about the only three places I knew of that, uh, you could bet well the, uh, Saturday that, uh, on in the Kentucky Derby at Church Hill Downs, uh, that afternoon a brakeman by the name of, uh, Joe Bishop came in from Cincinnati and I was down on the platform check my crew and he said, uh, "Johnny who you playing in the Derby today?" I said, "What about Derby?" He said, "The Kentucky Derby, you idiot." I said, "I don't know anything about horses or anything Joe." He said, "Well," said, "come on let's go over to the Johnson," said, "got two bucks?" I said, "Sure." "So come on let's go over there to Johnson's and, uh, and, uh, put up bet and see how we come out on the Kentucky Derby." Well we bet on (spells) W-H-I-S-K-E-R-Y, Whiskery, that was the first bet that I ever made on the horses and, uh, he won paid about, uh, 4 to 1 I think it was and, uh, I jumped up and down said how long would that be, incidentally 4 to 1 at that time I was making \$3.43 for eight hours work and, uh, 4 to 1 was pretty dern good odds / MJG: Um, mmm. /. In otherwords that was almost two days' work for, uh, the, the extra buck, I just jumped up and down and said how long this thing been going on, he said, "Well it was called the sport of kings," said, "the king started it quite a bit ago," and, uh, course I needed it too. But, uh, from then, from, for another, I don't know a year or more I bet quite a bit on the horses and I always had a whole big pocket full of money there was, uh, one, uh, it

was in the, uh, Cincinnati Post that, uh, that handicapper down there, I don't think of his name just now but I followed him for, uh, nearly two years and if I losed I'd double and if I lose again I would double again and you very seldom had to go, (spells) C-O-L-Y-E-R, Colyer was the name of the handicapper at that time, Bert Colyer and, uh, he, he was really good there was no two ways about it. He'd have anywhere from one to four winners a day and, uh, when you'd, uh, when money comes easy that way you have very little respect for it so consequently I didn't mind losing a few bucks. Well I kept it up and, uh, and was, uh, things were going pretty bad around town but lots of times I'd run around with, uh, uh, roll of money in my pocket bit a round as my wrist and they weren't ones either. But, uh, fortunately things have to come to an end and one day I was, uh, playing a system that I'd worked up and it, it had been a good job but this day I went all day without winning a single solitary bet. The last bet I met, the last bet I made was \$134 on the, uh, last race and I shoved that through underneath the counter down at Al Stickenger's and, uh, my, uh, self-confidence went with it, thank heaven / MJG: Now this would have been about 1929 or so? / and, uh, the next day, the next day my system would have won, I would have gotten all my money back and I would have been about ten or fifteen dollars ahead. After thinking over, pretty near, I don't know there was about two or three hundred dollar in there then but I would, the way I was playing it would have paid off, given all my money back and I'd of been about fifteen dollars ahead but I had lost my nerve and from that day on for the next eighteen months I kept track of those things and systematically as any bookkeeper in this town ever kept track of anything and at the end of the time I had found about five or six, uh, systems that were paying off wonderfully if you had a hundred thousand dollars or so to back um up. Well since I didn't have any thou-, hundred thousand dollars I decided the best place for all that stuff was in the waste basket so I took everything I had in my room at home down and threw it in the trash barrel

and from that day to this I wouldn't bet you the sun comes up or that, uh, that, uh, Evil jumps the canyon and makes it. Oh . . .

MJG: Now this was in, what about 1928-29 after you'd gone to work with the C&O, or was it later?

JTW: Yeah that was, uh, yeah that was about, uh, I think that was around '26, '20, let's see '26, '27 bout that, yes that's / MJG: Um, mmm. / about right / MJG: Um, mmm. / time in there, um, mmm. But the. . .

MJG: Now you went to work with the C&O right after graduation then, right after graduation from Huntington High?

JTW: I didn't quite get that.

MJG: You went to work for the C&O right after you graduated from Huntington High?

JTW: Yes, see I, uh, uh, I started on Feb-, February the 3rd, 1926 as I signed my regular job. I had been working extra for, uh, periodically for quite a while, the fella that, uh, had the 12 to 8 job he would, uh, go out especially when there was about ten or twelve inches of snow on the ground he'd come out and call the first two crews and, uh, then he had about two or three hours in there didn't have anything to do unless there was a special or something came up that we had to get into. But, and then he would get sick all of a sudden call me up and we didn't have any union so he got four hours for calling two crews and then I got four hours for working the rest of the night in the snow. Now if you can picture yourself to getting up at three o'clock in the morning, going down to the, walking to the depot in that much snow and, uh, working four hours and then coming back and going to Marshall in that day why that gives you some idea of what a good way to get an education if you haven't got anymore sense but . . .

MJG: Now could you describe what your job was when you first went / JTW: The, uh, . . . / with the railroad?

JTW: The job was to, uh, this Huntington is a terminal between Cincinnatti and Huntington that is course the west way then east way we had a split there, the engineer and the fireman, the entire crew out of Cincinnatti would change here in Huntington then we'd put an engineer and fireman on and they would run the, practically the same distance a hundred and sixty some miles up to Hinton, West Virginia and they would be relieved there. The crew, the train crew however would go on through to Clifton Forge while the engine crew would double back the next day. And that was the way it worked out on the different train. Uh, the, uh, the whole crew as I say would, uh, be changed from here to Cincinnatti and we also had, uh, trains that would go up to, uh, Detroit by way of Columbus and, uh, they, their terminal was also Huntington and, uh, at many, uh, we had usually about, uh, 25 trains through here a day and, uh, that was, uh, uh, day and night both but in the, uh, baseball season we'd have, uh, specials we'd get, uh, as many as 18 coaches together and send them up to, uh, Montgomery up to Handley, turn um around at Handley and back um up to Montgomery, load there and then they'd come on down and pick up, uh, baseball fans all the way down to Huntington. And then also the same date we'd send one to, Charleston and they would load, uh, as much as they could there and then on into Huntington and this other man would pick up behind him. Then they, they'd send one to Logan and, uh, then up the, uh, the different forks of the creek from Logan they would pick up people up there and come down well that gives them three trains going, in otherwords that's be three trains of approximately 15 cars each, some would have 18, some 16 and so forth, but 15 average, uh, be 45 carloads of people going to the baseball game at Cincinnatti. And, uh, the roundtrip though was only four dollars

[MJG: Um, mmm.] but they were crowded, they really were crowded and, uh, they had, we had special agents to, uh, police force all it special agents and consequently they took care of the, uh, people got a little too much, uh, alcohol and, uh, other misconduct

[MJG: Um, mmm.] on there they'd take um off and, uh, at the next stop leave um in custody of the police

at that place [MJG: Um, mmm.]. So we didn't have too much trouble, oh they'd fight they's no two ways about it, they always have a fight or two but that didn't, that was, uh, just the run of the day, there wasn't any particular, uh, smear about having a fight on the special.

MJG: Um, mmm. Now what exactly was your job?

JTW: How, huh?

MJG: What exactly were your responsibilities?

JTW: Well the, uh, the job was called (spells) C-R-E-W C-A-L-L-E-R, crew caller and, uh, it was just about the lowest down job on the railroad as a matter of fact I only made, uh, I made 25¢ more on the day than the section men. And, uh, I had to keep that job when I got on there, uh, I went, finished, I, uh, quit Marshall in 1929 after I'd been to the air force and took the examination out there and failed it why the bottom dropped out so I just, uh, hang on to the job and they wasn't any such a thing as overtime then. We had no union to back of us they, they, you'd could go out to the job send you home say well you're fired, we don't need you anymore. They were just that bad but, uh, after we got our union started [MJG: When was that?] why then . . .

MJG: When was that?

JTW: Uh, . . .

MJG: Approximately how long had you been with the railroad?

JTW: That would be about 19 and 30 I think, right in, right in that neighborhood somewhere around in there and my dad and, uh, three other men at the shops sent, uh, to, uh, Chicago and had the organizer to come down here and, uh, we all met down at the Fredrick Hotel, I think I tried to get the, uh, fella the other day to see if my name is on that application for the original, uh, Clerk's Union,

uh, here in Huntington the name of the lodge is the "We Well Lodge" #308. And, uh, that 308, uh, when, uh, compared with about two thousand nine hundred lodges in the United States today will tell you just about how far back we were [MJG: Um, mmm.] and we got a good start on it. Fortunately the, uh, Clerk's Union has been clean, we've had decent people in charge of it, they have never tried to con or, uh, steal our money or loan it or anything like that they've kept it in good substantial, uh, bonds the government and, uh, railroad and other things that, uh, were good and substantial and so that the, uh, Clerk's Union is one of the, I think it's one of the most steadfast in the whole United States.

MJG: Now were there any difficulties in organizing?

JTW: No, no the, uh, the company had broken the union I'm not, I wasn't, I'm not familiar with the background of that but, uh, after we came to Huntington there was no union, [MJG: Um, mmm.] no union at all and, uh, so however the, the uh, management, uh, especially the, uh, superintendent and our terminal train master, the superintendent was Mr. H.E. Webb, Harry Webb and, uh, the, uh, terminal train master was, we called him (spells) D-U-K-E, Duke Green, (spells) G-R-E-E-N, and uh, the general superintendent at that time was Mr. E.L. Bock, (spells) B-O-C-K. Huh, we use to send his, uh, when his check would come through we'd hold it up between us and the light and see that it was a thousand dollars a month and a thousand dollars a month was just almost exactly what, uh, we were, uh, a thousand dollars was about what we was making a year if we worked every day of the year. That was, uh, quite a little stake [MJG: Um, mmm.] but we, we use to look at, uh, hold it up between us and the light, you know, see that thousand dollars in there but, uh, those men were, uh, humanitarian. They, there wasn't any, uh, Clerk's Union or anything like that but they, they realized that if you fired this one you might get a worst one than they fired, uh, [MJG: Um, mmm.] hired the next one. So they put up with us and we

put up with them and, uh, consequently the, but they wouldn't go, wouldn't, uh, they were no overtime, no anything like that, you worked seven days a week and, uh, the biggest part of the job was six or seven days that's all there was to it.

MJG: How many hours a day, how many hours a day?

JTW: Uh, eight, / MJG: Eight hours? / yeah, eight. Now the, uh, however there were places, now at the shops, I worked at the shops extra in the, uh, soon after we got down here and they worked us ten hours a day / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, thirty minute lunch period that's all we got / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, but that was handling steel and boiler plate and lumber / MJG: Um, mmm. / and then I, later I got the, the to be the check out man at the foundry. They, they had a foundry, uh, where they made, uh, brass and bronze castings and barrings and things of that kind and I had to keep track of everything that came out of there and, uh, put it in different wagons, going to different places up the storeroom. But, uh, we worked ten hours a day there quite frequently too but most of the time it was, uh, the eight hour day that was, uh, the rule then. But, uh, things to getting back to the principal of it now the, as I said the, uh, they were very humanitarian and they looked after their men. If a guy got drunk and got in jail why they'd, uh, call the police and tell um to turn him loose and so forth and be responsible for it but, uh, they realized that, uh, you don't make a railroader over night. Of course railroaders, uh, I guess we owned our, uh, a place in society because of the ungodly hours, the ungodly conditions and the hellish stuff that we had to put up with from every angle that's really, uh, degrading in any way.

MJG: Could you describe some of that?

JTW: Well a railroader's life was a regular dog's life there's no two ways about it. When you start in there you start on an extra list and you are called

out anytime, and that was my job, to call out a man anytime during the night or day for any job that was necessary in other words we usually had five men on a crew, engineer, fireman, conductor, and two brakemen. Now if any one of those men would lay off then we had an extra list which involved the engineer and the firemen and all these different people had different rules to work by you see they wasn't any, uh, just, uh, hodge podge stuff they tried, we tried to get rules and regulations and the company to agree to them and things like that. And, but the worst part about the railroader's life was the fact that, uh, in the first three to five years that you were out there you didn't know where you were going, when you were going, it never rained on the railroad, the sun never got up to a hundred, the temperature never got up to a hundred (break in tape). You didn't have your own personality at all, you were on call 24 hours a day, you weren't paid for it but you, if you missed your call you missed your turn on the list and you had to go to the bottom, sometimes the list would be anywhere from 8 to 15 men which normally would turn over within a 24 hour period. But if you got out of place and didn't tell the yard office where you were going why then you missed your turn and you'd have to go to the bottom of the list and work up again. Now that, uh, that was really cruel there were no two ways about it. A person, uh, would look at the, the board and they'd say well let's see we're going to use one man here one there, one there, one there and I'm number nine. That's two in between, seven men are going to get out well then in the meantime he goes someplace, he thinks that he'll be back before that time and he got stuck out there then two more men lay off he miss his list he had to go clear to the bottom and work up again. And it was really rough there was no two ways about it. And they was just as rough on the women as they was on the men, as matter of fact I had more sympathy for them then did the men because they had to take care, go home and, uh, take care of things that, uh, they, while the men slept they worked at night they had to sleep

at night and things like that. But with all those top. of the extra list it was really rough, you just had to be in place almost any, any hour in the day and you never could tell how many men they were going to lay off or anything of the kind. But that was our job to keep, uh, in touch, they would call in and we had three telephones in the office which rang incessantly and, uh, that was one of the reasons why talking is one of my specialities because everytime you raised that receiver you had to have a answer and it didn't matter what it was, one, one Sunday afternoon a fella called me up and he was going to commit suicide. I said that's news when'd you get the idea, well he said, "I'm just fed up with the whole thing, I'm, I'm by myself I haven't got anybody in the world and I just think I'm going to commit suicide." I said listen you yella belly son of a bitch you're not going to commit suicide and don't call me back here either, you call the police department if you want anybody. He said, "You call the police." I said I haven't got time to fool with you, go on shoot your head off see if I care. And if you do, don't bother me anymore if you do I'll come up there and punch you in the nose. He said, "Well that's just the way it is there's no sympathy in this world, a fella wants to get out of it and nobody will help him." I said help you, I said if I come up there and punch you on the nose you won't need much help. Well in about an hour later he called back in, "Johnny I just got to talk to ya," I said I told you to call the police department I've got enough here to keep me busy now you get off of here and leave me alone, there's two other phones here and they're ringing and there's people want answers for business. "Well I've got to talk to somebody." I said alright I tell ya you just get in your car and go up on Gobbler's Knob and stand up there and just bellyache all you want to and I doubt whether anybody can hear you down in the park but you can go up there and just spout your head off and see if anybody cares. Well actually I felt so sorry for the man I didn't know what to do but there was no, no reason under

the sun that, uh, you'll give in to him and I just cuss him up one side and down the other and, uh, he called me bout four times that afternoon I said now look, I can't get out of here to come up there but if you don't, if you call here once more I'm going to put the special agents on you and they'll take you downtown and you can sit down to police headquarters and you can commit suicide down there if you want to and if you don't why they'll take you out some place so you won't blow a hole in the wall when you shoot your head off. "Well okay, I'll leave you alone." Uh, that man died a natural death about, uh, eight years later but, uh, every once in a while he would actually get the idea that he wanted to be a suicide. And everytime that I was on duty I would do him again just about the same thing but, uh, what had happened he had, uh, well I won't go into that you get too close to disclosing, I never disclosed and then another thing people would come to me with confidence and as far as I know I don't think I ever, ever, uh, disclosed anybody's confidence that, uh, they had given me in confidence and some of those poor damn devils they need to talk, somebody to talk to bad as I did, but I didn't have anybody to talk to. Well the, uh, as I said the, uh, three telephones kept you busy all the eight hours that you were on duty, uh, we had the, each of the five classifications you had the conductor, engineer, fireman, uh, two brakeman and then you had the yardmen. And they were also, uh, the yardmen were also classified the conductor and two brakemen and they were promoted men they had to know who had, was promoted, what job they had and so forth. It was quite a complicated main mess but it, uh, it did, uh, keep your mind active, I liked that because the, uh, when it came time to call the crews in the afternoons, uh, quite frequently I'd sit there and call, dial the whole 45 we had nine crews at that time on the yard, uh, dial the nine, the whole 45 men and, uh, then, uh, look at the board and see what I done and call the right men and then put um on the book later. It was a, it was really a challenge to, uh, uh, the engineer it, it was allright.

MJG: Now how long did you have that job?

JTW: Well I started in at, uh, it was, uh, uh, when I took it I intended to work it until I could get through Marshall and when I fall down in '29 why then, uh, there were no jobs after that you see, the next year or two things began to get really rough and, uh, so I, uh, needed the job to eat and, uh, then, uh, the wife I think she was kind of hungry too so we got married in 1933 and, uh, but we had a job right straight on through the depression seven days a week. But we never did get anymore money in 17 years that I worked that job for \$3.43 a day, / MJG: Um, mmm. / 17 year. And, uh, that, uh, figures up about \$103 a month I think. But, uh, I didn't sit still, uh, I would, uh, I had, uh, two or three small business going.

MJG: Now when did you start that, when did you start your small businesses?

JTW: Well, uh, let's see, uh, after, must have been about, uh, the time that beer came back, I'm beginning to get, uh, (spells) C-A-R-D-A-M-O-N, cardamon seeds and they were, uh, uh, the ingredients that are out of cardamon seed now is used in quite a number of these, uh, uh, breath deodorants / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, we, uh, bought the cardamon seed by the pound and then divided them into, uh, ten or fifteen or twenty in a package and sold them for, I think they sold for a nickel, maybe a dime, no they sold for a nickel. And, uh, put um on a cart and put um in the beer joints and that was one of my first enterprises. But it worked, / MJG: Um, mmm. / brought in some extra cash and, uh, well, uh, add a dollar here and a dollar there and that's allright and then . . .

MJG: Now was this before 1930, after 1930, approximately when would this be?

JTW: Yeah, right around in that, in the 30's, / MJG: In the early 30's? / yeah in / MJG: During the depression? /

'31, yeah '30, '31 right in there when I got started on that. And then it wasn't long till I picked up another one, uh, I don't exactly remember, uh, how I got in touch with it but somebody, don't know where, oh, oh yes I do too. The, uh, the man down at the freight house, I was getting in other items from different places, uh, uh, the Collins Products out of, uh, Memphis, Tennessee and, uh, the, now the stuff would come in, uh, uh, COD at, uh, different freight terminals. And, uh, then I would take, uh, the cash down and, and pay the bill and get my merchandise and one time I went down there and, uh, this fella said, "Johnnie," said "I've got some stuff here that, uh, has been refused and I think maybe you might be able to use it." And, uh, I said well what's it look like. Said, "Well it's soap." Let's take a look. So we went over and open one of these boxes and it was, uh, uh, about, uh, three inches wide and about, uh, sixteen inches long and, uh, bout a inch thick and that had seven cakes of soap inside, different, uh, types. One was, uh, lemon and then there was another one for the hair and, uh, a cake of shaving soap and, uh, two or three other different kinds but they was pretty good soap. Well it was manufactured by the J. Evanson and Co. in, uh, (whistles) Camden, New Jersey and, uh, this man had been buying it straight from there and having it shipped to different points and he would pick it up for some reason he didn't get this, I think there was three cases of it, that would be a 150 boxes and, uh, I don't remember what the price of it was but I, I bought it, paid the storage on it and bought it and took it over to my place and, uh, some of the other fellas that were buying things to resale they fell in love with it so then I wrote to the Evanson Company and, uh, in New Jersey and, uh, they, uh, a few days later I got a, a call from the manager of Wilson and Company here in, the meat packers here in Huntington. And, uh, Evanson was a, a, a subsidy of Wilson and, uh, so we, uh, made arrangements and we got fifty cases the first time, they wouldn't ship less than fifty cases in a car of soap coming through to Wilson and Company would have a couple of stops, they stopped

off at Hinton and then Charleston and then Huntington and would, each of us get what belonged to us. But they shipped us fifty, uh, cartons to start with and, uh, I think I sold it at, uh, to, ten cents would be five dollars a box, five dollars a case, I think I sold it for five dollars a case and made a dollar and a half on it and then the men would take it in the coal fields or different places and, uh, then they would get, uh, whatever. Sometimes just whatever that would double the price / MJG: Um, mmm. / and some of um did pretty darn well (laughter). We had, uh, then at one time there'd be, uh, uh, as many as ten to fifteen and as high as 25 men would come in for their supplies, well it got up to the point where we were getting the soap in by the carload, they had three different types by that time, they had this long one that was called rainbow, and then the lucky, lucky eight bar also it was in sort of a square box and then, uh, ah oh, I skipped that little one, what was the name of that one. But anyhow it had five cakes in it and, uh, we did allright.

MJG: Now how could you manage, uh, who actually ran the business for you, you were working a full time shift still at the C&O and then running this business on top of that?

JTW: Sure, why not, well you can make a / MJG: Were the hours the same? / no, no they, I worked 12 to 8 and ran the business in the daytime, / MJG: I see. / slept when I could if I didn't I slept on the job. Uh, you never, makes me angry sometimes at people, uh, people say well I can't do this, I can't do that and something else, but if they set their mind to it they can do dern near anything they want to. And I built up two or three nice businesses and, and uh, did very well with, uh, their business and their friends and everything else all the way into the family too. So I was living at home up until we were married and I was getting the family about \$103 a month was the average income if you didn't miss any days, you had no vacation, you had no sick leave, you had no, uh, time off or anything like that if you had off you were off and it came

out of your paycheck. But there wasn't any income tax and, and finally they put the state tax on, uh, yeah they'd be just for three years, that's all it would be, just for three years till we got the school straighten out, ha, ha, ha, the same old clap trap in the politics today for goodness / MJG: (Laughs). / sake, it's amusing ain't no two ways about it. We won't get far away from it here in West Virginia it's roads and schools, roads and schools now they're throwing in the bridges too. After the silver bridge went down in the river but, uh, uh, the uh, best thing, best advice I ever had and, and uh, it was one time one of my friends said, "What are you going to do when you graduate from school?" I said well haven't the slightest idea yet, that was high school, I said I haven't the slightest idea yet. But I would like to be a doctor maybe, he said, "Well he takes an awful lot of money," I said yeah he does. He said, "I'll tell you the truth John if you're going to stay in West Virginia I advise you to do one or two things either be a banker or a lawyer, because the people in West Virginia are controlled by outside companies and they'll never be able to get paid enough to live on so consequently the poor things are always hav'en to borrow money and the worst part about it is the biggest part of um are so uneducated they haven't heard real laws anyhow they'll always be in trouble up to their damn ears and if you're a lawyer you'll have plenty of clients all of your life;" / MJG: (Laughs). / Well I didn't have sense enough to do either one, I could have been but, uh, I didn't do it.

MJG: Now if we can come back to, to this depression era, obviously with, with working the two jobs and courting at the same time and eventually marrying, uh, you had a very busy life what, what were conditions like for you in the depression?

JTW: Pitiful. The, uh, the trains would go through here they had, uh, any number, I'm talking about '32 and '33, uh, uh, even back, uh, to '31 people was going from one part of the country just, they weren't hobos, they were people that actually would liked to have

worked but they knew they wasn't anything for them to do in their hometown so they got on a train. Well our, uh, special agents would put them off because they didn't want um to get killed and then they'd catch the next train either coming or going it didn't matter which, but it was really a rough job there was no two ways about it. Then the, uh, we lived at 621 16th street and the, the hobos had the, we called them hobos, they weren't hobos all of um they was very few hobos actually hobos, but uh, it gave, uh, some people the, uh, uh, loophole to get out from under looking after his family. He, he'd have their money and have a couple of kids and let, then he'd go off looking for a job and let her, uh, go back to her home or whatever. But, uh, they had our place marked they, and my mother would give away anywhere from, well any number of sandwiches a day up to a loaf of bread that'd be 15 sandwiches or so everyday to people that were hungry. And it, uh, must have been really rough. I had the little store downtown and people would come in there and, uh, if they didn't have any money I'd trust um, I'd give um some stuff to go to sale and go sale um but some of um didn't have the nerve to do that and I just pitied them because they were educated people and had been bookkeepers and different type of, uh, of help in all the different type of industry and they just simply, the industry either shut down or they curtailed the work force until people just didn't have anything at all. They were, it was horrible to see there was no two ways about it and I was just noticing those were there because the, uh, I would run an ad in the paper once in a while but I didn't have to run an ad in the paper it traveled by word of mouth and there's be people come in there and, and uh, if they had some money they'd buy stuff course I was selling the stuff at wholesale too and they could make a few pennies on it well sometimes you'd find some kinds of items that they would, uh, make real good with. But, uh, we had about 150, 200 items that would sell quick and, uh, safety pins, razor blades, shaving lotion, brillentine, soap, uh, pipe cleaners, uh, on down the line, anything that would, uh, in the kitchen line or something that, uh, people would use. People already had a job they

might want it or buy it in order to help this individual out and, uh, they did, uh, uh, uh, quite a few of um and there are some people in town today that, uh, every once in a while I get around one of um he'll say well if it hadn't been for you I don't know I guess I would have starved in that damn depression but, uh, it was true, it's true no two ways about it there were several of us handing, that, uh, they would come in and get the stuff and go sell it and bought for, bought the groceries for their families. Of course they weren't living high but it was, at least it was something to eat and that was a problem. There was, see people, uh, reduced to that degree, uh, and not to have any, anyway out whatever it was really bad there was no two ways about it course we were lucky my dad had, they cut him back, he was working at the shops and they cut him back until he was only working two days a week and, uh, of course up until we were married why I gave, uh, \$45, uh, a month to mother for liv-, staying at home . . .

MJG: Now that was almost half of your salary, that's almost half of your / JTW: Yeah, yeah. / salary?

JTW: Yeah, course once in a while I'd have to bum a dollar but not very often, / MJG: Um, mmm. / not often. The, uh, after we were married why I still looked they got along and then we had this house, uh, at Dunbar, uh, we bought a piece of property up there and it, they rented it to the state superintendent of preschools up there and he, was in that house all during the depression and since he was on a state salary he could pay his, uh, uh, rent regular and, and uh, that helped them out so most everybody had, uh, that is in the working class up, uh, pretty far on the middle class they had a rough time of it, don't see anymore of that. However, when I see some of the way people treat money these days and throw it around and have no, uh, thought whatever about it I, I sometimes I even wish that they would have to go through a depression like that and then they would gain respect for that thing that says one dollar in

God we trust, darn um. it just no sense to it. They belittle everything that they come across, things like that, course I, you didn't ask me to say that.

MJG: (Laughs) now in this same period that you met your wife now could you tell me how, how you came to meet her and, and why you decided / JTW: Well she came. . . / to get married in 1933?

JTW: She came, uh, she graduated from high school and, uh, she was from a large family and, uh, she came to work at the, uh, Union News Company stand in the depot and, uh, that's where I met her and I liked her because, uh, we got into a argument whether circumstances argue cases and we're still fighting about it / MJG: (Laughs). / . I say that, uh, in the biggest part of the time that you can take like the bull by the horns and you can kind of twist circumstances to suit the case, I still think it. And I practiced it for a long time, it worked alright. But, uh, uh, so many people bump head on into a tough problem and, uh, to me they, they start worry, well worry to me is a, a whole group of small circles where as if you begin to think you can think in one big long round circle and take off on a tandem once in a while but these little fellas you just go around and around and around and you have just thousands of um and you land up exactly where you started just one little circle / MJG: Um, mmm. / . But, uh, uh, I see people giving up too easily, uh, won't, uh, won't manage themselves right, they won't, and one thing that, uh, instead of the cost of living being, uh, the thing that sets people back I don't think it does itself, it's the cost of wanting and allow yourself to want far beyond your own degree or earning yet every magazine that you pick up it is the upper middle class into the higher brackets and that makes the people at the bottom who buy the same magazine, uh, think that they are going to have the same things and that, that's very pitiful / MJG: Um, mmm. / sometimes cause an awful lot of trouble but at the same time it keeps small

loan companies in business and, uh, also the, uh, stores that put out the, uh, routine buy now and pay next week. Well I had to buy an awful lot of it but I kept myself in range and I didn't get over the edge too far.

MJG: Now how did you find time to court?

JTW: To what?

MJG: To court, to date your, your future wife?

JTW: Date?

MJG: Yeah.

JTW: Oh, / MJG: You're, you're working two jobs 16 hours a day. / well, uh, we always found time to do whatever we wanted to no two ways about it but you'd go home and sleep for a few hours and take a bite and dress and go on about your business. Uh, if you fell asleep on the job that night well that was alright you get somebody say, "Hey, Bill you wake me up in a hour and a half or an hour," and the next time I'd go and wake Bill up so it fifty, fifty, but uh, no we didn't have, we'd go swimming out at Dickson and, uh, I had the car part of the time or biggest part of the time but, uh, things were tough, there was plenty of times when we got down the road we only had two straws for one five cent coca cola that, that's true / MJG: Um, mmm. / until I got pay day. And we got married the last pay day in June and I think we had, uh, let's see now, somewhere around forty dollars or something like that, / MJG: Um, mmm. / that was, that took us on our honeymoon and we took off in the car and went over east and, uh, Lexington, Virginia I believe it was and we came back the Fourth of July and, uh, rented a furnished apartment and that was, be forty four years ago come this pay day.

MJG: Um, mmm. Now furnished apartments were they very common?

JTW: Not, uh, not too common no, no they wasn't too many of um, uh, some of the, uh, this was up in the attic in a house right opposite, uh, Huntington High School, [/ MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, that made it close to the depot and Marion never did work for the first eight years we were married and then the war came along see from '33 to '41 the war came along and, uh, she began to, uh, she signed up for a course in (spells) C-O-D-E, code and went to Huntington High School about three nights a week, sometimes four and practiced, uh, with the, uh, send and receive messages by international code (break in tape). And, uh, when the, they finally took more and more men away and she got a job with the Corps of Engineers and that was, uh, (laughs) she had to work part of the time at night too only thing, oh boy, well anyhow . . .

MJG: Now how, how did she enjoy her work?

JTW: Huh?

MJG: How did she enjoy her work, Mrs. Walton, did she enjoy the, the job or . . .

JTW: Yeah, it was, a, it was a challenge and the, uh, uh, she knew the, uh, she got a long good in sending and receiving and so forth but, uh, when the, see she had to take the river reports of the dams and, and uh, lakes and so forth for all around the area [/ MJG: Um, mmm. /. And, uh, each of these guys would have maybe, uh, ten or fifteen items to send in and, uh, that was the first thing she had to do every morning. And then some of um when they found out that a woman in Huntington why they begin to sen-, send real fast you know and that, uh, that made her angry, you don't want to make her angry (laughter). So she got a, she practiced more and more on it and, uh, pretty soon these boys weren't sending quite so fast and not only that but in a short time after that they would say break, they couldn't get it she send so fast they couldn't get it. And then, uh, went from that into, uh, audio and, uh, they put her in the speakers and things like that and then

the, uh, the teletype came along and, uh, she's quite an expert on that teletype they have, uh, uh, what they call the, uh, uh, set up maybe five or eight different places on one, uh, line and she'd be sending these, uh, specifications out of Huntington to these places for bids on different government projects. And they were written on what we, the legal size paper normally called fullcap and, uh, it was, uh, quite frequent they, she send five to eight of those pages in, uh, single space without a single mistake. It was really wonderful there's no two ways about it / MJG: Um, mmm. / and it, it (break in tape). Marion was very proficient in her duties and, uh, very seldom caused anybody any trouble, once in a while she had to call about somebody maybe goofing up or something like that. She had the respect of every man throughout the area on the dams and things like that and, uh, consequently when they came to Huntington the first place they wanted to go was to see Marion. So up they go to the top floor of the, the, uh, building that, at uh, 8th street and 5th avenue and they'd have a big conversation, but uh, one, uh, outstanding instance we went to, uh, Bluestone one time and, uh, you'd think that royalty had arrived they, they showed us everything in that dam inside and out all of the, uh, places down below the water line and everything alot of people never would get down there they weren't allow down there but they took us down there and show us the whole building, the whole dam and everything and, uh, one man in particular he thinks Marion is just about the finest thing that ever was he was very high in the Masonic lodge and did alot of work for children and different types of, uh, humanitarian deeds as well as, uh, uh, tak-, taking care of the higher chairs in the organization and we, he lives here in Huntington and we go to see him quite often and it's just like, uh, you go to see your grandfather or / MJG: Um, mmm. / somebody like that. He just thinks the world and all of Marion even today. And that was the, uh, the thing all around the whole place, we went out to, uh, uh, East Lynn, no not East Lynn but, uh, Jenny Wiley

that dam that's out there near Jenny Wiley State Park and, uh, the same thing happened out there they were just tickled to death to see Marion out there / MJG: Um, mmm. / and showed us all around and everything was very nice. That's a good payoff for a life time work, / MJG: Um, mmm. / and uh, to have the respect and, uh, everything of all of the people that you work with / MJG: Um, mmm. /. Then, uh, she kept the job straight through, uh, from, went from, uh, the hand, uh, sending and receiving messages by the bug and then into, uh, the talking end of it and then finally to the tele-, the teletype and of course they still have the, the records. They came in every morning for the, uh, hydraulics department / MJG: Um, mmm. / down at the, the corps / MJG: Um, mmm. / the, uh, they're very important and, uh, regulate the flow of the river and the amount of water compounded behind any of the dams all over the area.

MJG: Now one other area that I wanted you to comment on, you started quite sometime ago a file, a newspaper clipping file and I was wondering if you would, uh, discuss with us, uh, how you came to start this hobby and, uh, what it's meant to you and how it's evolved.

JTW: Well (clears throat) I've always like to, to keep a record of what goes on from day to day that, uh, course started with my, the uh, memory book or the book, uh, that I had at, uh, Greenbriar and that, that goes clear back to 1919 and, uh, that's about the only record, I mean the best record that I have particular up to that time and later I had a, a, a three piece set of dictionary and, uh, everytime I'd run across something that, uh, was interesting I'd just stick that into the dictionary. Sometimes where it belonged, sometime just to get rid of it. And it begin to grow and, and then from there on, uh, first one thing and another the, the uh, during the time, uh, strife of, uh, the, uh, uh, during the recession I mean that the whole thing I lost all of that in bankruptcy in 1950 and, uh, then, uh, I lost pictures and everything that I had store

in, the store at 11th street, I had a store at 325 11th street and, uh, when the bankruptcy struck why I just lost all respect for everything and didn't even try, I could have had it that was my personal property and I could of had it if I, I gone there and demanded it but I didn't I let it go, much to my sorrow I did. But that, uh, I had all of the, uh, things bout World War I, the sinking of the Luisitania and a whole group of things along that line. It was terrifically interesting and quite a big bunch of it, we lived in an apartment at that time, didn't have any room to store anything so after I got this store I had, uh, uh, built, rebuilt the basement and had a nice place down there and, uh, I stored quite a bit of this, uh, material in there and so consequently from, uh, uh, up to 1950 for, that's the reason why some of this stuff had now starts at '40, '35 and '40 and comes on up. If it hadn't been for that, if I had claimed the stuff that was actually mine it would have been clear back in the early '20's and come on up but I've always like to, to uh, the continuity of, uh, things (break in tape). The, uh, uh, clippings of course have always fascinated me but to get the continuity has been one of the things that I began years ago to try to get. Now in this, uh, uh, the material I turned over to Marshall there's some of it goes back, way back into the '40's and you'll find some pieces of it, uh, maybe three or four or five hundred pieces of it that go back much beyond that. But the stacks that are called meat, marked meat (spells) M-E-A-T, uh, means that there is one, uh, page of a newspaper in there or maybe a whole newspaper that need to be cut and this pe-, these, uh, clippings, articles on those pages will fit into the files that are already in existence. And, uh, that will be completed and constructed right straight through the, uh, thing that, uh, I liked more than anything else was to be able to look back over a period of maybe two or three months. Like for instance the, uh, uh, United Mine Workers, uh, president, uh, Boyle and, uh, some of the things like that and then we come down to the, uh, governor of the state, Barron and, uh, the, you have clippings

in there sometimes as much as six months apart yet this is the only place that you can really pick out the whole file on that particular item. Not only on these two gentlemen but, uh, uh, the, uh, uh, Hearst was one of um and then, uh, the, uh, J. Paul Getty I always, uh, like to keep some things on him and, uh, the other one, who's that guy that died the other day, / MJG: Howard Hughes, Howard Hughes. / yeah, Howard Hughes, there's an excellent file on Hughes, excellent. Uh, maybe three, four hundred items from different, uh, stages and they, they grow into, uh, not only just the ordinary, uh, run of the mill some of um are real good articles from magazines and things of that kind. Then in particular are the, uh, the, uh, editorials from, uh, leading magazines through those period of years of Look, Life and, uh, magazines of that kind why the continuity of it is just wonderful. You can pick those things up and have a conversation with the people that have now been, that wrote them and are now dead five to fifteen year and, uh, one of the outstanding things of it was the, uh, mind, uh, the adventures of the mind, they ran that, I think there was about fifty of those I don't, I didn't get all of um but they are really wonderful things to be able to refer to as well as the, uh, article by the very intelligent men that we had at the head of the newspapers from different parts of the company, country throughout the year and those things can be, uh, boiled down until you take, uh, 5, 10, or 15 of those and put them side by side it gives you what the, the different ways that the different parts of the country look at the same thing that's goin' on in Washington or any particular, uh, phase of whatever is in, uh, vogue at that time. It doesn't necessarily have to be, uh, politics, it doesn't have to be religion, it doesn't have to be anything now for instance we have the coyote for instance they had a whole lot of trouble bout coyotes and, uh, and the ranchers they were up in arms and the different people throughout the United States wrote articles on that. And, uh, it gave, uh, uh, quite a bit of thought you could, uh, see how that they were thinking in places where a coyote hadn't

even been much less, uh, bothering any of their sheep or anything. But, uh, it, the, to match up things from different sections of the country and, uh, to keep um in contact so that all you have to do is to reach into this one file of that particular item and there it is, just maybe, uh, you may have only 50 or may have 200 of, uh, articles on the same thing, uh, well that was how grew up. And now that it is, uh, become what it has the, uh, the big files that I had to break down, the, uh, the one I refer to most often is because of sports because I couldn't keep up with everything that was in sports, I didn't even try to it would be too much, the sports magazines and the editors and all the different people who handle that sort of material are much well versed in, in deciding on what to do but if there's a special occasion or special event some, some fella runs a mile or little better than somebody else and all of that kind of stuff and the, the those things that are particular outstanding. Now the, uh, famous boxer that we had Joe Louis was my pick of the boxers, he was really a, a gentleman there was no two ways about it but of course the, uh, uh, people on the sidelines picked him clean a long time before he should have lost all of his money. And the, it looks like that Ali, uh, is coming along, uh, getting a little bit more sensitivity than he had to start with. Course I can't, uh, condone the fact that he did pass up the, uh, his, uh, army stretch because he claimed that it was against his religion and so forth. Well as far as that's concerned there's ten thousand or twenty thousand other people still in hiding for the simple reason that they didn't believe in, in fighting either so consequently they were draft dodgers and card burners and things of that kind. That's another interesting item too is the thing that, uh, went through here on the, the people who were on the outside the different types and then how they've tried to get um back in and to give um, uh, justice and give um, uh, their citizenship and some other things back but they're still, course they're still fighting some bout it yet.

MJG: Where did your materials come from, where did you

get your papers and magazines and so on?

JTW: Well the, uh, uh, the majority of it I subscribed to it. I subscribe to the anchorage, uh, Alaska paper one time for six months and then the, uh, uh, Christian Science Monitor, I subscribed for that for, oh two or three years and, uh, nearly everything that I had, uh, on the outside I had to subscribe to it except the, uh, Los Angeles Times. A friend of ours lives, uh, a lady friend, uh, lives, uh, her name is, uh, Gladys Harbour lives in a, a home, a retirement home, uh, at Lancaster, California. And she was out there in the desert by herself, her daughter lives in Los Angeles, works in there and, uh, had her family there and she would come out to see Gladys, uh, every once in a while but Gladys didn't have much to do so I sent her ten dollars a month for, oh maybe five or six years or maybe longer, uh, clear up until just recently I cut it out because she, uh, couldn't, uh, wasn't physically able to go ahead and cut the papers. But she kept, uh, kept, I guess there must be a hundred or more files, uh, pouches of files that she clipped that are in the stuff at Marshall now and that will make very, very interesting things from the Los Angeles Times the, uh, I liked the, uh, San Francisco paper too it has a different approach there are people, I don't know why but those two places only just a few hundred miles apart have such a different mental attitude and approach to different things that happen, I like both of um. But, uh, Gladys, uh, supplied me with all of that for years and years and, uh, kept her something to do, boy she'd get so mad she, she'd write us letters on the side, uh, sent us letters and she'd get so mad at people she couldn't, oh she just nearly boil but had we not done that, not have done that this poor soul I don't know what would have happened she just have a rough time getting along from day to day I suppose. But she'd get the paper in the morning and go through that and cut out things for me and quite a number of things that were never, never told on this side of the Mississippi River / MJG: Um, mmm. / and, uh, (clears throat) then, uh, at one time, uh, the fellas that

came from Detroit on a train to Detroit they would bring me papers and put them in a drawer in the conductor's room and, uh, once in a while they'd bring me one from, from Cincinnati maybe from over east some of the papers out of, uh, uh, Lynchburg or maybe, uh, as far down as Richmond

/ MJG: Um, mmm. / places like that. And, uh, they all knew I was doing that sort of stuff but, and uh, so they would help out every once in a while but the majority of the papers I bought myself for the, to get the, uh, not particular the continuity but the, the uh, uh, uh, little hand full of information from, uh, Arizona, New Mexico, Chicago, any place

/ MJG: Um, mmm. / and my nephew when he would go on a trip he would bring me a whole hand full, uh, maybe as many as 25 or 30 from different places that they had gone through. And all of that is in there, all of that goes in but the thing of it is just like making soup, it takes a whole lot of good information to come up with a very, very tasty dish and that's what this is, it's a tasty dish there's no two ways about it. The, uh, Montreal paper I had several of those and then one of the, uh, things that, uh, is good is that, uh, the, uh, uh, Tombstone Epitaph from Tombstone, / MJG: Um, mmm. / Arizona. Now there's the, uh, people there they have, uh, uh, real first hand records of Indian activities back, way back into the, into the, years and years and years ago when the, uh, before they even had any of the, uh, uh, officers in Washington to take care of the Indians. Of course that happened, the latest one that came through was on, uh, uh, Custer's Last Stand and they was also a article this month in The Smithsonian magazine on Custer's Last Stand and, uh, fortunately Marion and I visited the battlefield at one time so it, uh, it gives us something to think about as well as the, uh, be able to put into the files / MJG: Um, mmm. /. But the magazines themselves, uh, Fortune and, uh, Forbes, uh, Jim, uh, my nephew always, uh, gave me for-, er Forbes for a Christmas present but fortunately all the rest of um in that list, uh, long, very long list I, that I subscribe to, uh, from the magazine stand point Life and all of those fellas and then the, uh, as I say each, uh, week I

had the four that I picked up, uh, the New York Times, the Columbus Dispatch, Courier Journal and, uh, the, uh, course the Huntington paper but the others I would always pick up one or two of the ones in different parts of the country and that, uh, is, is still some of um that hadn't been cut in the, uh, stuff at Marshall. But they are and the, the continuity is not broken.

MJG: Um, mmm. Well it sounds like a fascinating hobby and, and one which certainly has proven a great boom to Marshall, uh, I was wondering if we could switch gears a bit you mentioned, uh, earlier in the discussion, uh, that in, in 1950, uh, you went through a bankruptcy proceeding, /JTW: Well (clears throat). . ._/ could you talk about that, would you be willing to talk about that for . . .

JTW: The, uh, the uh, fact that, uh, see from 1931 up to '50 I always had one or two businesses on the, going on the side, uh, the, uh, in 19 and 40, '40 and '41 well I put the arcade, I established the Fun and Fancy Gift Shop in the First Huntington Arcade. I rent it from Bill Riter and, uh, I held that for, uh, bout, uh, four years and, uh, in the meantime Marion had, uh, gone to work for the engineers and, uh, so that left me with, uh, persons in charge who didn't, uh, particular care where the sale was on or not just so the rent was paid /MJG: (Laughs)._/ but, uh, so I had to give that up. Then, uh, uh, at the, we had the place on, uh, 10th street, 523 10th street that, we came over there with that in 1932 or three, bout '30 yeah '32, we were already established when we got married. And then we kept that clear on up until they sold the property and, uh, at that time there was not a place in town to get to put the stuff so I stored it over on 11th street but I still operated my, my wholesale angle, uh, the soap and things like that, I operated that out of the place on 11th street. Then I had a place at, uh, bout 14th street on 4th avenue, I used it for a storeroom and warehouse, uh, to back up a place that I finally got on 523, uh, no 325 11th street. And there I had, the, uh, uh, nice

big room on the first floor and then a, a basement under two places down below. And, uh, in the basement I had, uh, toys and novelties and, uh, hobby items and on the first floor was glass, china, pottery and, and uh, some, uh, jewelry and things like that. So everything went along pretty good but then you see at that time in the, the money was, uh, uh, not, not anything like it is now by any means. There was very little money to be spent of course there's, uh, people that did have money and then we always had the band festival and things like that, they brought money in and then of course Christmas time and Father's Day and Mother's Day and things like that they all helped out. So we made ends meet but, uh, and we didn't get rich by a long shot but, uh, there came a time when, uh, I had, uh, well I had always borrowed money from first one place and another and, uh, and then this particular instance, uh, the, uh, certain party decided that, uh, they wanted the piece of property that we had bought after my father and mother died when we, uh, cashed all our bonds and everything and took the money from the piece of property we sold at Dunbar and, uh, put that into the, uh, lot and we bought about, uh, almost two acres on top of Whitaker Hill and, uh, that was a, that's a beautiful spot there's no two ways about it. But this other individual he decided that, uh, since I had, uh, was having a little tough time going along that he would foreclose and, uh, that's what happened so he got the lot and built himself a house on it. And, uh, I never was in the house but it, the lot itself was, uh, a true statement, it's the only place in the United States that I've seen that I really wanted to live but I was denied that so we made
 [MJG: You . . .] it the best way we could get by with.

MJG: You cut it and cleared it yourself, you cut it and cleared it yourself?

JTW: The, uh, the, uh, there had, uh, it was part of an old farm and, uh, judge, uh, I can't remember the name judge, uh, took it over, took the, he was the lawyer for, uh, the estate and he, there was some lien or something at Hamlin and, uh, I furnished

the money for them to go ahead and, and break the deadlock and, uh, from that time on they hadn't been able to sale the, uh, lots up there because of this deadlock and, uh, when we found out what, when I found out what it was and the, the reason for it why then, uh, I hired this, uh, lawyer to go ahead and, and break it and, uh, they did, they broke it loose and then from then on the lots were for sale and it must be very beautiful up there, I haven't been up on that hill for years now but, uh, they begin to sale the lots on both sides our lot was #2 Plum Tree Lane. And, uh, as I said it's the only spot in the United States that I really would liked to have lived. But, uh, those things, uh, don't, uh, go so September 15, 1950 I had 64¢ and, uh, everything was gone, it cost us about \$3,000 other than that to, uh, clear things up. We had to buy our stuff back from the banrupt court and things along that line and then I began to look for a job and I got a job at the B&B market. At that time I weighed 248 pounds and, uh, I began to work day and night. I worked 8 to 4 for the C&O five days a week. I worked, uh, from, the B&B started my time at 4 and then I'd get through about 12 or 1 o'clock in the morning and I kept that up at six and seven days a week for the next three and a half years. Then finally we, uh, came up with enough money to make a down payment on a place at 5830 Pea Ridge Road [MJG: Um, mmm.]. And that's where we reside today. But, uh, we won't be here very long because we're going to the top of the world (laughter).

MJG: Well Mr. Walton it certainly has been interesting talking to you, you've certainly led a very varied and, and fascinating life and I want to thank you for sharing, uh, your time and your, your reminiscences with us.

JTW: Well it, uh, it's been pretty rough in spots. Now we did have, we had trips, uh, there were times when we were making good, uh, money those carloads of soap bought, uh, some money in and a good part of that was plowed right on into the business [MJG: Um, mmm.].